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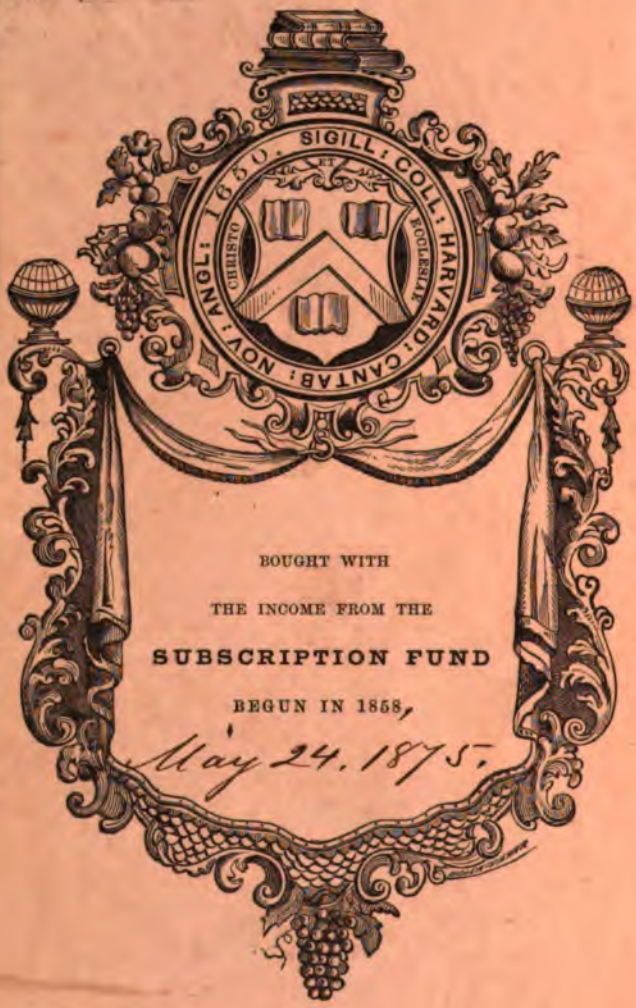

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JULY 1874.

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BATHSHEBA FLUNG HER HANDS TO HER FACE.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1874.

Far from the Madding Crowd.

CHAPTER XXX.

Hot Cheeks and Tearful Eyes.

HALF-AN-HOUR later Bathsheba entered her own house. There burnt upon her face when she met the light of the candles the flush and excitement which were little less than chronic with her now. The farewell words of Troy, who had accompanied her to the very door, still lingered in her ears. He had bidden her adieu for two days, which were, so he stated, to be spent at Bath in visiting some friends. He had also kissed her a second time.

It is only fair to Bathsheba to explain here a little fact which did not come to light till a long time afterwards: that Troy's presentation of himself so aptly at the roadside this evening was not by any distinctly preconcerted arrangement. He had hinted—she had forbidden; and it was only on the chance of his still coming that she had dismissed Oak, fearing a meeting between them just then.

She now sank down into a chair, wild and perturbed by all these new and fevering sequences. Then she jumped up with a manner of decision, and fetched her desk from a side table.

In three minutes, without pause or modification, she had written a letter to Boldwood, at his address beyond Casterbridge, saying mildly but firmly that she had well considered the whole subject he had brought before her and kindly given her time to decide upon; that her final decision was that she could not marry him. She had expressed to Oak an intention to wait till Boldwood came home before communicating to him her conclusive reply. But Bathsheba found that she could not wait.

It was impossible to send this letter till the next day; yet to quell her uneasiness by getting it out of her hands, and so, as it were, setting the act in motion at once, she arose to take it to any one of the women who might be in the kitchen.

She paused in the passage. A dialogue was going on in the kitchen, and Bathsheba and Troy were the subject of it.

"If he marry her, she'll gie up farming."

"'Twill be a gallant life, but may bring some trouble between the mirth—so say I."

"Well, I wish I had half such a husband."

Bathsheba had too much sense to mind seriously what her servitors said about her; but too much womanly redundance of speech to leave alone what was said till it died the natural death of unminded things. She burst in upon them.

"Who are you speaking of?" she asked.

There was a pause before anybody replied. At last Liddy said, frankly, "What was passing was a bit of a word about yourself, miss."

"I thought so! Maryann and Liddy and Temperance—now I forbid you to suppose such things. You know I don't care the least for Mr. Troy—not I. Everybody knows how much I hate him.—Yes," repeated the froward young person, "*hate* him!"

"We know you do, miss," said Liddy, "and so do we all."

"I hate him too," said Maryann.

"Maryann—O you perjured woman! How you can speak that wicked story!" said Bathsheba, excitedly. "You admired him from your heart only this morning in the very world, you did. Yes, Maryann, you know it!"

"Yes, miss, but so did you. He is a wild scamp now, and you are right to hate him."

"He's *not* a wild scamp! How dare you to my face! I have no right to hate him, nor you, nor anybody. But I am a silly woman. What is it to me what he is? You know it is nothing. I don't care for him; I don't mean to defend his good name, not I. Mind this, if any of you say a word against him you'll be dismissed instantly."

She flung down the letter and surged back into the parlour, with a big heart and tearful eyes, Liddy following her.

"O miss!" said mild Liddy, looking pitifully into Bathsheba's face. "I am sorry we mistook you so! I did think you cared for him; but I see you don't now."

"Shut the door, Liddy."

Liddy closed the door, and went on: "People always says such foolery, miss. I'll make answer hencefor'ard, 'Of course a lady like Miss Everdene can't love him;' I'll say it out in plain black and white."

Bathsheba burst out: "O Liddy, are you such a simpleton! Can't you read riddles? Can't you see! Are you a woman yourself!"

Liddy's clear eyes rounded with wonderment.

"Yes, you must be a blind thing, Liddy!" she said, in reckless abandonment and grief. "Oh, I love him to very distraction and misery and agony. Don't be frightened at me, though perhaps I am enough to frighten any innocent woman. Come closer—closer." She put her arms round Liddy's neck. "I must let it out to somebody; it is wearing me away. Don't you yet know enough of me to see through that miserable denial of mine? O God, what a lie it was! Heaven and my Love forgive me. And don't you know that a woman who loves at all thinks nothing of perjury when it is balanced against her love? There, go out of the room; I want to be quite alone."

Liddy went towards the door.

"Liddy, come here. Solemnly swear to me that he's not a bad man; that it is all lies they say about him!"

"But, miss, how can I say he is not if ——"

"You graceless girl. How can you have the cruel heart to repeat what they say? Unfeeling thing that you are. . . . . But *I'll* see if you or anybody else in the village, or town either, dare do such a thing!" She started off, pacing from fire-place to door, and back again.

"No, miss. I don't—I know it is not true," said Liddy, frightened at Bathsheba's unwonted vehemence.

"I suppose you only agree with me like that to please me. But, Liddy, he *cannot be* bad, as is said. Do you hear?"

"Yes, miss, yes."

"And you don't believe he is?"

"I don't know what to say, miss," said Liddy, beginning to cry. "If I say No, you don't believe me; and if I say Yes, you rage at me."

"Say you don't believe it—say you don't!"

"I don't believe him to be so bad as they make out."

"He is not bad at all. . . . . My poor life and heart, how weak I am!" she moaned, in a relaxed, desultory way, heedless of Liddy's presence. "Oh, how I wish I had never seen him! Loving is misery for women always. I shall never forgive my Maker for making me a woman, and dearly am I beginning to pay for the honour of owning a pretty face." She freshened and turned to Liddy suddenly. "Mind this, Lydia Smallbury, if you repeat anywhere a single word of what I have said to

you inside this closed door, I'll never trust you, or love you, or have you with me a moment longer—not a moment."

"I don't want to repeat anything," said Liddy with womanly dignity of a diminutive order; "but I don't wish to stay with you. And, if you please, I'll go at the end of the harvest, or this week, or to-day . . . . I don't see that I deserve to be put upon and stormed at for nothing!" concluded the small woman, bigly.

"No, no, Liddy; you must stay!" said Bathsheba, dropping from haughtiness to entreaty with capricious inconsequence. "You must not notice my being in a taking just now. You are not as a servant—you are a companion to me. Dear, dear—I don't know what I am doing since this miserable ache o'my heart has weighted and worn upon me so. What shall I come to! I suppose I shall die quite young. Yes, I know I shall. I wonder sometimes if I am doomed to die in the Union. I am friendless enough, God knows."

"I won't notice anything, nor will I leave you!" sobbed Liddy, impulsively putting up her lips to Bathsheba's, and kissing her.

Then Bathsheba kissed Liddy, and all was smooth again.

"I don't often cry, do I, Lidd? but you have made tears come into my eyes," she said, a smile shining through the moisture. "Try to think him a good man, won't you, dear Liddy?"

"I will, miss, indeed."

"He is a sort of steady man in a wild way, you know. That's better than to be as some are, wild in a steady way. I am afraid that's how I am. And promise me to keep my secret—do, Liddy! And do not let them know that I have been crying about him, because it will be dreadful for me, and no good to him, poor thing!"

"Death's head himself shan't wring it from me, mistress, if I've a mind to keep anything, and I'll always be your friend," replied Liddy, emphatically, at the same time bringing a few more tears into her own eyes, not from any particular necessity, but from an artistic sense of making herself in keeping with the remainder of the picture, which seems to influence women at such times. "I think God likes us to be good friends, don't you?"

"Indeed I do."

"And, dear miss, you won't harry me and storm at me, will you? because you seem to swell so tall as a lion then, and it frightens me. Do you know, I fancy you would be a match for any man when you are in one o' your takings."

"Never! do you?" said Bathsheba, slightly laughing, though somewhat seriously alarmed by this Amazonian picture of herself. "I hope I am not a bold sort of maid—mannish?" she continued, with some anxiety.

"Oh no, not mannish; but so almighty womanish that 'tis getting on that way sometimes. Ah! miss," she said, after having drawn her breath very sadly in and sent it very sadly out, "I wish I had half your failing that way. 'Tis a great protection to a poor maid in these days!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

BLAME: FURY.

THE next evening Bathsheba, with the idea of getting out of the way of Mr. Boldwood in the event of his returning to answer her note in person, proceeded to fulfil an engagement made with Liddy some few hours earlier. Bathsheba's companion, as a gage of their reconciliation, had been granted a week's holiday to visit her sister, who was married to a thriving hurdler and cattle crib-maker living in a delightful labyrinth of hazel copse not far from Yalbury. The arrangement was that Miss Everdene should honour them by coming there for a day or two to inspect some ingenious contrivances which this man of the woods had introduced into his wares.

Leaving her instructions with Gabriel and Maryann that they were to see everything carefully locked up for the night, she went out of the house just at the close of a timely thunder-shower, which had refined the air, and daintily bathed the mere coat of the land, all beneath being dry as ever. Freshness was exhaled in an essence from the varied contours of bank and hollow, as if the earth breathed maiden breath, and the pleased birds were hymning to the scene. Before her among the clouds there was a contrast in the shape of lairs of fierce light which showed themselves in the neighbourhood of a hidden sun, lingering on to the farthest north-west corner of the heavens that this midsummer season allowed.

She had walked nearly three miles of her journey, watching how the day was retreating, and thinking how the time of deeds was quietly melting into the time of thought, to give place in its turn to the time of prayer and sleep, when she beheld advancing over the hill the very man she sought so anxiously to elude. Boldwood was stepping on, not with that quiet tread of reserved strength which was his customary gait, in which he always seemed to be balancing two thoughts. His manner was stunned and sluggish now.

Boldwood had for the first time been awakened to woman's privileges in the practice of tergiversation without regard to another's distraction and possible blight. That Bathsheba was a firm and positive girl, far less inconsequent than her fellows, had been the very lung of his hope; for he had held that these qualities would lead her to adhere to a straight course for consistency's sake, and accept him, though her fancy might not flood him with the iridescent hues of uncritical love. But the argument now came back as sorry gleams from a broken mirror. The discovery was no less a scourge than a surprise.

He came on looking upon the ground, and did not see Bathsheba till they were less than a stone's throw apart. He looked up at the sound of her pit-pat, and his changed appearance sufficiently denoted to her the depth and strength of the feelings paralysed by her letter.

"Oh; is it you, Mr. Boldwood," she faltered, a guilty warmth pulsing in her face.

Those who have the power of reproaching in silence may find it a means more effective than words. There are accents in the eye which are not on the tongue, and more tales come from pale lips than can enter an ear. It is both the grandeur and the pain of the remoter moods that they avoid the pathway of sound. Boldwood's look was unanswerable.

Seeing she turned a little aside, he said, "What, are you afraid of me?"

"Why should you say that?" said Bathsheba.

"I fancied you looked so," said he. "And it is most strange, because of its contrast with my feeling for you."

She regained self-possession, fixed her eyes calmly, and waited.

"You know what that feeling is," continued Boldwood deliberately. "A thing strong as death. No dismissal by a hasty letter affects that."

"I wish you did not feel so strongly about me," she murmured. "It is generous of you, and more than I deserve, but I must not hear it now."

"Hear it? What do you think I have to say, then? I am not to marry you, and that's enough. Your letter was excellently plain. I want you to hear nothing—not I."

Bathsheba was unable to direct her will into any definite groove for freeing herself from this fearfully awkward position. She confusedly said, "Good evening," and was moving on. Boldwood walked up to her heavily and dully.

"Bathsheba—darling—is it final indeed?"

"Indeed it is."

"O, Bathsheba—have pity upon me!" Boldwood burst out. "God's sake, yes—I am come to that low, lowest stage—to ask a woman for pity! Still, she is you—she is you."

Bathsheba commanded herself well. But she could hardly get a clear voice for what came instinctively to her lips: "There is little honour to the woman in that speech." It was only whispered, for something unutterably mournful no less than distressing in this spectacle of a man showing himself to be so entirely the vane of a passion enervated the feminine instinct for punctilios.

"I am beyond myself about this, and am mad," he said. "I am no stoic at all to be supplicating here; but I do supplicate to you. I wish you knew what is in me of devotion to you; but it is impossible, that. In bare human mercy to a lonely man don't throw me off now!"

"I don't throw you off—indeed, how can I? I never had you." In her noon-clear sense that she had never loved him she forgot for a moment her thoughtless angle on that day in February.

"But there was a time when you turned to me, before I thought of you. I don't reproach you, for even now I feel that the ignorant and cold darkness that I should have lived in if you had not attracted me by that letter—valentine you call it—would have been worse than my know-

ledge of you, though it has brought this misery. But, I say, there was a time when I knew nothing of you, and cared nothing for you, and yet you drew me on. And if you say you gave me no encouragement I cannot but contradict you."

"What you call encouragement was the childish game of an idle minute. I have bitterly repented of it—ay, bitterly, and in tears. Can you still go on reminding me?"

"I don't accuse you of it—I deplore it. I took for earnest what you insist was jest, and now this that I pray to be jest you say is awful wretched earnest. Our moods meet at wrong places. I wish your feeling was more like mine, or my feeling more like yours! O could I but have foreseen the torture that trifling trick was going to lead me into, how I should have cursed you; but only having been able to see it since, I cannot do that, for I love you too well! But it is weak, idle drivelling to go on like this. . . . Bathsheba, you are the first woman of any shade or nature that I have ever looked at to love, and it is the having been so near claiming you for my own that makes this denial so hard to bear. How nearly you promised me! But I don't speak now to move your heart, and make you grieve because of my pain; it is no use, that. I must bear it; my pain would get no less by paining you."

"But I do pity you—deeply—oh so deeply!" she earnestly said.

"Do no such thing—do no such thing. Your dear love, Bathsheba, is such a vast thing beside your pity that the loss of your pity as well as your love is no great addition to my sorrow, nor does the gain of your pity make it sensibly less. Oh sweet—how dearly you spoke to me behind the spear-bed at the washing-pool, and in the barn at the shearing, and that dearest last time in the evening at your home! Where are your pleasant words all gone—your earnest hope to be able to love me? Where is your firm conviction that you would get to care for me very much? Really forgotten?—really?"

She checked emotion, looked him quietly and clearly in the face, and said in her low firm voice, "Mr. Boldwood, I promised you nothing. Would you have had me a woman of clay when you paid me that furthest, highest compliment a man can pay a woman—telling her he loves her? I was bound to show some feeling, if I would not be a graceless shrew. Yet each of those pleasures was just for the day—the day just for the pleasure. How was I to know that what is a pastime to all other men was death to you? Have reason, do, and think more kindly of me!"

"Well, never mind arguing—never mind. One thing is sure: you were all but mine, and now you are not nearly mine. Everything is changed, and that by you alone, remember. You were nothing to me once, and I was contented; you are now nothing to me again, and how different the second nothing is from the first! Would to God you had never taken me up, since it was only to throw me down!"

Bathsheba, in spite of her mettle, began to feel unmistakable signs that she was inherently the weaker vessel. She strove miserably against

this femininity which would insist upon supplying unbidden emotions in stronger and stronger current. She had tried to elude agitation by fixing her mind on the trees, sky, any trivial object before her eyes, whilst his reproaches fell, but ingenuity could not save her now.

"I did not take you up—surely I did not!" she answered as heroically as she could. "But don't be in this mood with me. I can endure being told I am in the wrong, if you will only tell it me gently! Oh sir, will you not kindly forgive me, and look at it cheerfully?"

"Cheerfully! Can a man fooled to utter heartburning find a reason for being merry? If I have lost, how can I be as if I had won? Heavens, you must be heartless quite! Had I known what a fearfully bitter sweet this was to be, how I would have avoided you, and never seen you, and been deaf to you. I tell you all this, but what do you care! You don't care."

She returned silent and weak denials to his charges, and swayed her head desperately, as if to thrust away the words as they came showering about her ears from the lips of the trembling man in the climax of life, with his bronzed Roman face and fine frame.

"Dearest, dearest, I am wavering even now between the two opposites of recklessly renouncing you, and labouring humbly for you again. Forget that you have said No, and let it be as it was. Say, Bathsheba, that you only wrote that refusal to me in fun—come, say it to me!"

"It would be untrue, and painful to both of us. You overrate my capacity for love. I don't possess half the warmth of nature you believe me to have. An unprotected childhood in a cold world has beaten gentleness out of me."

He immediately said with more resentment: "That may be true, somewhat; but ah, Miss Everdene, it won't do as a reason! You are not the cold woman you would have me believe. No, no. It isn't because you have no feeling in you that you don't love me. You naturally would have me think so—you would hide from me that you have a burning heart like mine. You have love enough, but it is turned into a new channel. I know where."

The swift music of her heart became hubbub now, and she throbbed to extremity. He was coming to Troy. He did then know what had transpired! And the name fell from his lips the next moment.

"Why did Troy not leave my treasure alone?" he asked, fiercely. "When I had no thought of injuring him why did he force himself upon your notice! Before he worried you your inclination was to have me; when next I should have come to you your answer would have been Yes. Can you deny it—I ask, can you deny it?"

She delayed the reply, but was too honest to withhold it. "I cannot," she whispered.

"I know you cannot. But he stole in in my absence and robbed me. Why didn't he win you away before, when nobody would have been grieved?—when nobody would have been set tale-bearing. Now the

people sneer at me—the very hills and sky seem to laugh at me till I blush shamefully for my folly. I have lost my respect, my good name, my standing—lost it, never to get it again. Go and marry your man—go on!"

"Oh sir—Mr. Boldwood!"

"You may as well. I have no further claim upon you. As for me, I had better go somewhere alone, and hide,—and pray. I loved a woman once. I am now ashamed. When I am dead they'll say, miserable love-sick man that he was. Heaven—heaven—if I had got jilted secretly, and the dishonour not known, and my position kept! But no matter, it is gone, and the woman not gained. Shame upon him—shame!"

His unreasonable anger terrified her, and she glided from him, without obviously moving, as she said, "I am only a girl—do not speak to me so!"

"All the time you knew—how very well you knew—that your new freak was my misery. Dazzled by brass and scarlet—oh Bathsheba—this is woman's folly indeed!"

She fired up at once. "You are taking too much upon yourself!" she said, vehemently. "Everybody is upon me—everybody. It is unmanly to attack a woman so! I have nobody in the world to fight my battles for me, but no mercy is shown. Yet if a thousand of you sneer and say things against me, I *will not* be put down!"

"You'll chatter with him doubtless about me. Say to him, 'Boldwood would have died for me.' Yes, and you have given way to him knowing him to be not the man for you. He has kissed you—claimed you as his. Do you hear, he has kissed you. Deny it!"

The most tragic woman is cowed by a tragic man, and although Boldwood was, in vehemence and glow, nearly her own self rendered into another sex, Bathsheba's cheek quivered. She gasped, "Leave me sir—leave me! I am nothing to you. Let me go on!"

"Deny that he has kissed you."

"I shall not."

"Ha—then he has!" came hoarsely from the farmer.

"He has," she said, slowly, and in spite of her fear, defiantly. "I am not ashamed to speak the truth."

"Then curse him; and curse him!" said Boldwood, breaking into a whispered fury. "Whilst I would have given worlds to touch your hand you have let a rake come in without right or ceremony and—kiss you! Heaven's mercy—kiss you! . . . Ah, a time of his life shall come when he will have to repent—and think wretchedly of the pain he has caused another man; and then may he ache, and wish, and curse, and yearn—as I do now!"

"Don't, don't, oh don't pray down evil upon him!" she implored in a miserable cry. "Anything but that—anything. Oh be kind to him, sir, for I love him dearly!"

Boldwood's ideas had reached that point of fusion at which outline

and consistency entirely disappear. The impending night appeared to concentrate in his eye. He did not hear her at all now.

"I'll punish him—by my soul that will I! I'll meet him, soldier or no, and I'll horsewhip the untimely stripling for this reckless theft of my one delight. If he were a hundred men I'd horsewhip him . . ." He dropped his voice suddenly and unnaturally. "Bathsheba, sweet lost coquette, pardon me. I've been blaming you, threatening you, behaving like a churl to you, when he's the greatest sinner. He stole your dear heart away with his unfathomable lies! . . . It is a fortunate thing for him that he's gone back to his regiment—that he's in Melchester, and not here! I hope he may not return here just yet. I pray God he may not come into my sight, for I may be tempted beyond myself. Oh Bathsheba, keep him away—yes keep him away from me!"

For a moment Boldwood stood so inertly after this that his soul seemed to have been entirely exhaled with the breath of his passionate words. He turned his face away, and withdrew, and his form was soon covered over by the twilight as his footsteps mixed in with the low hiss of the leafy trees.

Bathsheba, who had been standing motionless as a model all this latter time, flung her hands to her face, and wildly attempted to ponder on the exhibition which had just passed away. Such astounding wells of fevered feeling in a still man like Mr. Boldwood were incomprehensible, dreadful. Instead of being a man trained to repression he was—what she had seen him.

The force of the farmer's threats lay in their relation to a circumstance known at present only to herself; her lover was coming back to Weatherbury the very next day. Troy had not returned to Melchester Barracks as Boldwood and others supposed, but had merely gone for a day or two to visit some acquaintance in Bath, and had yet a week or more remaining to his furlough.

She felt wretchedly certain that if he revisited her just at this nick of time, and came into contact with Boldwood, a fierce quarrel would be the consequence. She panted with solicitude when she thought of possible injury to Troy. The least spark would kindle the farmer's swift feelings of rage and jealousy; he would lose his self-mastery as he had this evening; Troy's blitheness might become aggressive; it might take the direction of derision, and Boldwood's anger might then take the direction of revenge.

With almost a morbid dread of being thought a gushing girl, this guideless woman too well concealed from the world under a manner of carelessness the warm depths of her strong emotions. But now there was no reserve. In her distraction, instead of advancing further, she walked up and down, beating the air with her fingers, pressing her brow, and sobbing brokenly to herself. Then she sat down on a heap of stones by the wayside to think. There she remained long. The dark rotundity of the earth approached the foreshores and promontories of

coppery cloud which bounded a green and pellucid expanse in the western sky, amaranthine glosses came over them then, and the unresting world wheeled her round to a contrasting prospect eastward, in the shape of indecisive and palpitating stars. She gazed upon their silent throes amid the shades of space, but realised none at all. Her troubled spirit was far away with Troy.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NIGHT: HORSES TRAMPING.

THE village of Weatherbury was quiet as the graveyard in its midst, and the living were lying well-nigh as still as the dead. The church clock struck eleven. The air was so empty of other sounds that the whirr of the clockwork immediately before the strokes was distinct, and so was also the click of the same at their close. The notes flew forth with the usual blind obtuseness of inanimate things—flapping and rebounding among walls, undulating against the scattered clouds, spreading through their interstices into unexplored miles of space.

Bathsheba's crannied and mouldy halls were to-night occupied only by Maryann, Liddy being, as was stated, with her sister, whom Bathsheba had set out to visit. A few minutes after eleven had struck, Maryann turned in her bed with a sense of being disturbed. She was totally unconscious of the nature of the interruption to her sleep. It led to a dream, and the dream to an awakening, with an uneasy sensation that something had happened. She left her bed and looked out of the window. The paddock abutted on this end of the building, and in the paddock she could just discern by the uncertain gray a moving figure approaching the horse that was feeding there. The figure seized the horse by the forelock, and led it to the corner of the field. Here she could see some object which circumstances proved to be a vehicle, for after a few minutes' spent apparently in harnessing, she heard the trot of the horse down the road, mingled with the sound of light wheels.

Two varieties only of humanity could have entered the paddock with the ghost-like glide of that mysterious figure. They were a woman and a gipsy man. A woman was out of the question in such an occupation at this hour, and the comer could be no less than a thief, who might probably have known the weakness of the household on this particular night, and have chosen it on that account for his daring attempt. Moreover, to raise suspicion to conviction itself, there were gipsies in Weatherbury Bottom.

Maryann, who had been afraid to shout in the robber's presence, having seen him depart, had no fear. She hastily slipped on her clothes, stumped down the disjointed staircase with its hundred creaks, ran to Coggan's, the nearest house, and raised an alarm. Coggan called Gabriel,

who now again lodged in his house as at first, and together they went to the paddock. Beyond all doubt the horse was gone.

"Listen!" said Gabriel.

They listened. Distinct upon the stagnant air came the sounds of a trotting horse passing over Weatherbury Hill—just beyond the gipsies' encampment in Weatherbury Bottom.

"That's our Dainty—I'll swear to her step," said Jan.

"Mighty me! Won't mis'ess storm and call us stupids when she comes back!" moaned Maryann. "How I wish it had happened when she was at home, and none of us had been answerable!"

"We must ride after," said Gabriel, decisively. "I'll be responsible to Miss Everdene for what we do. Yes, we'll follow."

"Faith, I don't see how," said Coggan. "All our horses are two heavy for that trick except little Poppet, and what's she between two of us?—If we only had that pair over the hedge we might do something."

"Which pair?"

"Mr. Boldwood's Tidy and Moll."

"Then wait here till I come hither again," said Gabriel. He ran down the hill towards Farmer Boldwood's.

"Farmer Boldwood is not at home," said Maryann.

"All the better," said Coggan. "I know what he's gone for."

Less than five minutes brought up Oak again, running at the same pace, with two halters dangling from his hand.

"Where did you find 'em?" said Coggan, turning round and leaping upon the hedge without waiting for an answer.

"Under the eaves. I knew where they were kept," said Gabriel, following him. "Coggan, you can ride bare-backed? there's no time to look for saddles."

"Like a hero!" said Jan.

"Maryann, you go to bed," Gabriel shouted to her from the top of the hedge.

Springing down into Boldwood's pastures, each pocketed his halter to hide it from the horses, who, seeing the men empty-handed, docilely allowed themselves to be seized by the mane, when the halters were dexterously slipped on. Having neither bit nor bridle, Oak and Coggan extemporised the former by passing the rope in each case through the animal's mouth and looping it on the other side. Oak vaulted astride, and Coggan clambered up by aid of the bank, when they ascended to the gate and galloped off in the direction taken by Bathsheba's horse and the robber. Whose vehicle the horse had been harnessed to was a matter of some uncertainty.

Weatherbury Bottom was reached in three or four minutes. They scanned the shady green patch by the roadside. The gipsies were gone.

"The villains!" said Gabriel. "Which way have they gone, I wonder?"

"Straight on, as sure as God made little apples," said Jan.

"Very well; we are better mounted, and must overtake 'em," said Oak. "Now, on at full speed!"

No sound of the rider in their van could now be discovered. The road-metal grew softer and more clayey as Weatherbury was left behind, and the late rain had wetted its surface to a somewhat plastic, but not muddy state. They came to cross-roads. Coggan suddenly pulled up Moll and slipped off.

"What's the matter?" said Gabriel.

"We must try to track 'em, since we can't hear 'em," said Jan, fumbling in his pockets. He struck a light, and held the match to the ground. The rain had been heavier here, and all foot and horse tracks made previous to the storm had been abraded and blurred by the drops, and they were now so many little scoops of water, which reflected the flame of the match like eyes. One set of tracks was fresh and had no water in them; one pair of ruts was also empty, and not small canals, like the others. The footprints forming this recent impression were full of information as to pace; they were in equidistant pairs, three or four feet apart, the right and left foot of each pair being exactly opposite one another.

"Straight on!" Jan exclaimed. "Tracks like that mean a stiff gallop. No wonder we don't hear him. And the horse is harnessed—look at the ruts. Ay, that's our mare sure enough!"

"How do you know?"

"Old Jimmy Harris only shoed her last week, and I'd swear to his make among ten thousand."

"The rest of the gipsies must have gone on earlier, or some other way," said Oak. "You saw there were no other tracks?"

"Trew." They rode along silently for a long weary time. Coggan's watch struck one. He lighted another match, and examined the ground again.

"'Tis a canter now," he said, "throwing away the light. A twisty rickety pace for a gig. The fact is, they overdrove her at starting; we shall catch them yet."

Again they hastened on. Coggan's watch struck two. When they looked again the hoof-marks were so spaced as to form a sort of zigzag if united, like the lamps along a street.

"That's a trot, I know," said Gabriel.

"Only a trot now," said Coggan cheerfully. "We shall overtake him in time."

They pushed rapidly on for yet two or three miles. "Ah! a moment," said Jan. "Let's see how she was driven up this hill. 'Twill help us." A light was promptly struck upon his gaiters as before, and the examination made.

"Hurrah!" said Coggan. "She walked up here—and well she might. We shall get them in two miles, for a crown."

They rode three, and listened. No sound was to be heard save a

mill-pond trickling hoarsely through a hatch, and suggesting gloomy possibilities of drowning by jumping in. Gabriel dismounted when they came to a turning. The tracks were absolutely the only guide as to the direction that they now had, and great caution was necessary to avoid confusing them with some others which had made their appearance lately.

"What does this mean?—though I guess," said Gabriel, looking up at Coggan as he moved the match over the ground about the turning. Coggan, who, no less than the panting horses, had latterly shown signs of weariness, again scrutinized the mystic characters. This time only three were of the regular horseshoe shape. Every fourth was a dot.

He screwed up his face, and emitted a long "whew-w-w!"

"Lame," said Oak.

"Yes. Dainty is lamed; the near-foot-afore," said Coggan slowly, staring still at the footprints.

"We'll push on," said Gabriel, remounting his humid steed.

Although the road along its greater part had been as good as any turnpike-road in the country it was nominally only a byway. The last turning had brought them into the high road leading to Bath. Coggan recollected himself.

"We shall have him now!" he exclaimed.

"Where?"

"Pettiton Turnpike. The keeper of that gate is the sleepiest man between here and London—Dan Randall, that's his name—knowed en for years, when he was at Casterbridge gate. Between the lameness and the gate 'tis a done job."

They now advanced with extreme caution. Nothing was said until, against a shady background of foliage, five white bars were visible, crossing their route a little way ahead.

"Hush—we are almost close!" said Gabriel.

"Amble on upon the grass," said Coggan.

The white bars were blotted out in the midst by a dark shape in front of them. The silence of this lonely time was pierced by an exclamation from that quarter.

"Hoy-a-hoy! Gate!"

It appeared that there had been a previous call which they had not noticed, for on their close approach the door of the turnpike-house opened, and the keeper came out half-dressed, with a candle in his hand. The rays illumined the whole group.

"Keep the gate close!" shouted Gabriel. "He has stolen the horse!"

"Who?" said the turnpike-man.

Gabriel looked at the driver of the gig, and saw a woman—Bathsheba, his mistress.

On hearing his voice she had turned her face away from the light. Coggan had, however, caught sight of her in the meanwhile.

"Why, 'tis mistress—I'll take my oath!" he said, amazed.

Bathsheba it certainly was, and she had by this time done the trick she could do so well in crises not of love, namely, mask a surprise by coolness of manner.

"Well, Gabriel," she enquired quietly, "where are you going?"

"We thought ——" began Gabriel.

"I am driving to Bath," she said, taking for her own use the assurance that Gabriel lacked. "An important matter made it necessary for me to give up my visit to Liddy, and go off at once. What, then, were you following me?"

"We thought the horse was stole."

"Well—what a thing! How very foolish of you not to know that I had taken the trap and horse. I could neither wake Maryann nor get into the house, though I hammered for ten minutes against her window-sill. Fortunately, I could get the key of the coach-house, so I troubled no one further. Didn't you think it might be me?"

"Why should we, miss?"

"Perhaps not. Why, those are never Farmer Boldwood's horses! Goodness mercy! what have you been doing—bringing trouble upon me in this way? What! mustn't a lady move an inch from her door without being dogged like a thief?"

"But how were we to know, if you left no account of your doings," expostulated Coggan, "and ladies don't drive at these hours as a jineral rule of society."

"I did leave an account—and you would have seen it in the morning. I wrote in chalk on the coach-house doors that I had come back for the horse and gig, and driven off; that I could arouse nobody, and should return soon."

"But you'll consider, ma'am, that we couldn't see that till it got daylight."

"True," she said, and though vexed at first she had too much sense to blame them long or seriously for a devotion to her that was as valuable as it was rare. She added with a very pretty grace, "Well, I really thank you heartily for taking all this trouble; but I wish you had borrowed anybody's horses but Mr. Boldwood's."

"Dainty is lame, miss," said Coggan. "Can ye go on?"

"It was only a stone in her shoe. I dismounted and pulled it out a hundred yards back. I can manage very well, thank you. I shall be in Bath by daylight. Will you now return, please?"

She turned her head—the gateman's candle shimmering upon her quick, clear eyes as she did so—passed through the gate, and was soon wrapped in the embowering shades of mysterious summer boughs. Coggan and Gabriel put about their horses, and, fanned by the velvety air of this July night, retraced the road by which they had come.

"A strange vagary, this of hers, isn't it, Oak?" said Coggan, curiously.

"Yes," said Gabriel, shortly. "Coggan, suppose we keep this night's work as quiet as we can?"

"I am of one and the same mind."

"Very well. We shall be home by three o'clock or so, and can creep into the parish like lambs."

Bathsheba's perturbed meditations by the roadside had ultimately evolved a conclusion that there were only two remedies for the present desperate state of affairs. The first was merely to keep Troy away from Weatherbury till Boldwood's indignation had cooled; the scond to listen to Oak's entreaties, and Boldwood's denunciations, and give up Troy altogether.

Alas! Could she give up this new love—induce him to renounce her by saying she did not like him—could no more speak to him, and beg him, for her good, to end his furlough in Bath, and see her and Weatherbury no more?

It was a picture full of misery, but for a while she contemplated it firmly, allowing herself, nevertheless, as girls will, to dwell upon the happy life she would have enjoyed had Troy been Boldwood, and the path of love the path of duty—inflicting upon herself gratuitous tortures by imagining him the lover of another woman after forgetting her; for she had penetrated Troy's nature so far as to estimate his tendencies pretty accurately, but unfortunately loved him no less in thinking that he might soon cease to love her—indeed considerably more.

She jumped to her feet. She would see him at once. Yes, she would implore him by word of mouth to assist her in this dilemma. A letter to keep him away could not reach him in time, even if he should be disposed to listen to it.

Was Bathsheba altogether blind to the obvious fact that the support of a lover's arms is not of a kind best calculated to assist a resolve to renounce him? Or was she sophistically sensible, with a thrill of pleasure, that by adopting this course for getting rid of him she was ensuring a meeting with him, at any rate, once more?

It was now dark, and the hour must have been nearly ten. The only way to accomplish her purpose was to give up the idea of visiting Liddy at Yalbury, return to Weatherbury Farm, put the horse into the gig, and drive at once to Bath. The scheme seemed at first impossible: the journey was a fearfully heavy one, even for a strong horse; it was most venturesome for a woman, at night, and alone.

But could she go on to Liddy's and leave things to take their course? No, no, anything but that. Bathsheba was full of a stimulating turbulence, beside which caution vainly prayed for a hearing. She turned back towards the village.

Her walk was slow, for she wished not to enter Weatherbury till the cottagers were in bed, and, particularly, till Boldwood was secure. Her plan was now to drive to Bath during the night, see Sergeant Troy in the morning before he set out to come to her, bid him farewell, and dismiss him: then to rest the horse thoroughly (herself to weep the while, she

thought), starting early the next morning on her return journey. By this arrangement she could trot Dainty gently all the day, reach Liddy at Yalbury in the evening, and come home to Westerbury with her whenever they chose—so nobody would know she had been to Bath at all.

This idea she proceeded to carry out, with what success we have already seen.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

In the Sun: A Harbinger.

A week passed, and there were no tidings of Bathsheba; nor was there any explanation of her Gilpin's rig.

Then a note came for Maryann, stating that the business which had called her mistress to Bath still detained her there; but that she hoped to return in the course of another week.

Another week passed. The oat-harvest began, and all the men were afield under a monochromatic Lammas sky, amid the trembling air and short shadows of noon. Indoors nothing was to be heard save the droning of blue-bottle flies; out-of-doors the whetting of scythes and the hiss of treesy oat-ears rubbing together as their perpendicular stalks of amber-yellow fell heavily to each swath. Every drop of moisture not in the men's bottles and flagons in the form of cider was raining as perspiration from their foreheads and cheeks. Drought was everywhere else.

They were about to withdraw for a while into the charitable shade of a tree in the fence, when Coggan saw a figure in a blue coat and brass buttons running to them across the field.

"I wonder who that is?" he said.

"I hope nothing is wrong about mistress," said Maryann, who with some other women were tying the bundles (oats being always sheafed on this farm), "but an unlucky token came to me indoors this morning. I went to unlock the door and dropped the key, and it fell upon the stone floor and broke into two pieces. Breaking a key is a dreadful bodement. I wish mis'ess was home."

"'Tis Cain Ball," said Gabriel, pausing from whetting his reaphook.

Oak was not bound by his agreement to assist in the corn-field; but the harvest-month is an anxious time for a farmer, and the corn was Bathsheba's, so he lent a hand.

"He's dressed up in his best clothes," said Matthew Moon. "He hev been away from home for a few days, since he's had that felon upon his finger; for a' said, since I can't work I'll have a hollerday."

"A good time for one—an excellent time," said Joseph Poorgrass, straightening his back; for he, like some of the others, had a way of resting a while from his labour on such hot days for reasons preternaturally small; of which Cain Ball's advent on a week-day in his Sunday clothes was one of the first magnitude. "'Twas a bad leg allowed me

to read the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Mark Clark learnt All-Fours in a whitlow."

"Ay, and my father put his arm out of joint to have time to go courting," said Jan Coggan in an eclipsing tone, wiping his face with his shirt-sleeve and thrusting back his hat upon the nape of his neck.

By this time Cainy was nearing the group of harvesters, and was perceived to be carrying a large slice of bread and ham in one hand, from which he took mouthfuls as he ran, the other hand being wrapped in a bandage. When he came close, his mouth assumed the bell shape, and he began to cough violently.

"Now, Cainy!" said Gabriel, sternly. "How many more times must I tell you to keep from running so fast when you are eating? You'll choke yourself some day, that's what you'll do, Cain Ball."

"Hok-hok-hok!" replied Cain. "A crumb of my victuals went the wrong way—hok-hok! That's what 'tis, Mister Oak! And I've been visiting to Bath because I had a felon on my thumb; yes, and I've seen—ahok-hok!"

Directly Cain mentioned Bath, they all threw down their hooks and forks and drew round him. Unfortunately the erratic crumb did not improve his narrative powers, and a supplementary hindrance was that of a sneeze, jerking from his pocket his rather large watch, which dangled in front of the young man pendulum-wise.

"Yes," he continued, directing his thoughts to Bath and letting his eyes follow, "I've seed the world at last—yes—and I've seed our mis'ess—ahok-hok-hok!"

"Bother the boy!" said Gabriel. "Something is always going the wrong way down your throat, so that you can't tell what's necessary to be told."

"Ahok! there! Please, Mister Oak, a gnat have just flewed into my stomach and brought the cough on again!"

"Yes, that's just it. Your mouth is always open, you young rascal."

"'Tis terrible bad to have a gnat fly down yer throat, pore boy!" said Matthew Moon.

"Well, at Bath you saw—" prompted Gabriel.

"I saw our mistress," continued the junior shepherd, "and a soldier, walking along. And bymeby they got closer and closer, and then they went arm-in-crook, like courting complete—hok-hok! like courting complete—hok!—courting complete—" Losing the thread of his narrative at this point simultaneously with his loss of breath, their informant looked up and down the field apparently for some clue to it. "Well, I see our mis'ess and a soldier—a-ha-a-wk!"

"D—— the boy!" said Gabriel.

"'Tis only my manner, Mister Oak, if ye'll excuse it," said Cain Ball, looking reproachfully at Oak, with eyes drenched in their own dew.

"Here's some cider for him—that'll cure his throat," said Jan

Coggan, lifting a flagon of cider, pulling out the cork, and applying the hole to Cainy's mouth; Joseph Poorgrass in the meantime beginning to think apprehensively of the serious consequences that would follow Cainy Ball's strangulation in his cough, and the history of his Bath adventures dying with him.

"For my poor self, I always say 'please God' afore I do anything," said Joseph, in an unboastful voice; "and so should you, Cain Ball. 'Tis a great safeguard, and might perhaps save you from being choked to death some day."

Mr. Coggan poured the liquor with unstinted liberality at the suffering Cain's circular mouth; half of it running down the side of the flagon, and half of what reached his mouth running down outside his throat, and half of what ran in going the wrong way, and being coughed and sneezed around the persons of the gathered reapers in the form of a rarefied cider fog, which for a moment hung in the sunny air like a small exhalation.

"There's a great clumsy sneeze! Why can't ye have better manners, you young dog!" said Coggan, withdrawing the flagon.

"The cider went up my nose!" cried Cainy, as soon as he could speak; "and now 'tis gone down my neck, and into my poor dumb felon, and over my shiny buttons and all my best cloze!"

"The pore lad's cough is terrible unfortunate," said Matthew Moon. "And a great history on hand, too. Bump his back, shepherd."

"'Tis my nater," mourned Cain. "Mother says I always was so excitable when my feelings were worked up to a point."

"True, true," said Joseph Poorgrass. "The Balls were always a very excitable family. I knowed the boy's grandfather—a truly nervous and modest man, even to genteel refinement. 'Twas blush, blush with him, almost as much as 'tis with me—not but that 'tis a fault in me."

"Not at all, Master Poorgrass," said Coggan. "'Tis a very noble quality in ye."

"Heh-heh! well, I wish to noise nothing abroad—nothing at all," murmured Poorgrass, diffidently. "But we are born to things—that's true. Yet I would rather my trifle were hid; though, perhaps, a high nature is a little high, and at my birth all things were possible to my Maker and he may have begrudged no gifts. . . . But under your bushel, Joseph! under your bushel with you! A strange desire, neighbours, this desire to hide, and no praise due. Yet there is a Sermon on the Mount with a calendar of the blessed at the head, and certain meek men may be named therein."

"Cainy's grandfather was a very clever man," said Matthew Moon. "Invented a apple-tree out of his own head, which is called by his name to this day—the Early Ball. You know 'em, Jan? A Quarrington grafted on a Tom Putt, and a Rathe-ripe upon top o' that again. 'Tis trew a' used to bide about in a public-house in a way he had no business to by rights, but there—' a were a clever man in the sense of the term."

"Now, then," said Gabriel impatiently, "what did you see, Cain?"

"I seed our mis'ess go into a sort of a park place, where there's seats, and shrubs and flowers, arm-in-crook with a soldier," continued Cainy firmly, and with a dim sense that his words were very effective as regarded Gabriel's emotions. "And I think the soldier was Sergeant Troy. And they sat there together for more than half-an-hour, talking moving things, and she once was crying almost to death. And when they came out her eyes were shining and she was as white as a lily; and they looked into one another's faces, as desperately friendly as a man and woman can be."

Gabriel's features seemed to get thinner. "Well, what did you see besides?"

"Oh, all sorts."

"White as a lily? You are sure 'twas she?"

"Yes."

"Well, what besides?"

"Great glass windows to the shops, and great clouds in the sky, full of rain, and old wooden trees in the country round."

"You stun-poll! What will ye say next!" said Coggan.

"Let en alone," interposed Joseph Poorgrass. "The boy's maning is that the sky and the earth in the kingdom of Bath is not altogether different from ours here. 'Tis for our good to gain knowledge of strange cities, and as such the boy's words should be suffered, so to speak it."

"And the people of Bath," continued Cain, "never need to light their fires except as a luxery, for the water springs up out of the earth ready boiled for use."

"'Tis true as the light," testified Matthew Moon. "I've heard other navigators say the same thing."

"They drink nothing else there," said Cain, "and seem to enjoy it, to see how they swaller it down."

"Well, it seems a barbarous practice enough to us, but I daresay the natives think nothing of it," said Matthew.

"And don't victuals spring up as well as drink?" asked Coggan, twirling his eye.

"No—I own to a blot there in Bath—a true blot. God didn't provide 'em with victuals as well as drink, and 'twas a drawback I couldn't get over at all."

"Well, 'tis a curious place, to say the least," observed Moon; "and it must be a curious people that live therein."

"Miss Everdene and the soldier were walking about together, you say?" said Gabriel, returning to the group.

"Ay, and she wore a beautiful gold-colour silk gown, trimmed with black lace, that would have stood alone without legs inside if required. 'Twas a very winsome sight; and her hair was brushed splendid. And when the sun shone upon the bright gown and his red coat—my! how handsome they looked. You could see 'em all the length of the street."

"And what then?" murmured Gabriel.

"And then I went into Griffin's to have my boots hobbed, and then I went to Riggs's batty-cake shop, and asked 'em for a penneth of the cheapest and nicest stales, that were all but blue-mouldy but not quite. And whilst I was chawing 'em down I walked on and seed a clock with a face as big as a baking-trendle——"

"But that's nothing to do with mistress!"

"I'm coming to that, if you'll leave me alone, Mister Oak!" remonstrated Cainy. "If you excites me, perhaps you'll bring on my cough, and then I shan't be able to tell ye nothing."

"Yes—let him tell it his own way," said Coggan.

Gabriel settled into a despairing attitude of patience, and Cainy went on:—

"And there were great large houses, and more people all the week long than at Weatherbury club-walking on White Tuesdays. And I went to grand churches and chapels. And how the parson would pray! Yes, he would kneel down, and put up his hands together, and make the holy gold rings on his fingers gleam and twinkle in yer eyes, that he'd earned by praying so excellent well!—Ah yes, I wish I lived there."

"Our poor Parson Thirdly can't get no money to buy such rings," said Matthew Moon thoughtfully. "And as good a man as ever walked. I don't believe poor Thirdly have a single one, even of humblest tin or copper. Such a great ornament as they'd be to him on a dull afternoon, when he's up in the pulpit lighted by the wax candles! But 'tis impossible, poor man. Ah, to think how unequal things be."

"Perhaps he's made of different stuff than to wear 'em," said Gabriel grimly. "Well, that's enough of this. Go on, Cainy—quick."

"Oh—and the new style of parsons wear moustaches and long beards," continued the illustrious traveller, "and look like Moses and Aaron complete, and make we fokes in the congregation feel all over like the children of Israel."

"A very right feeling—very," said Joseph Poorgrass.

"And there's two religions going on in the nation now—High Church and High Chapel. And, thinks I, I'll play fair; so I went to High Church in the morning, and High Chapel in the afternoon."

"A right and proper boy," said Joseph Poorgrass.

"Well, at High Church they pray singing, and believe in all the colours of the rainbow; and at High Chapel they pray preaching, and believe in drab and whitewash only. And then—I didn't see no more of Miss Everdene at all."

"Why didn't you say so before, then?" exclaimed Oak, with much disappointment.

"Ah," said Matthew Moon, "she'll wish her cake dough if so be she's over intimate with that man."

"She's not over intimate with him," said Gabriel, indignantly.

"She would know better," said Coggan. "Our mis'ess has too much sense under those knots of black hair to do such a mad thing."

"You see, he's not a coarse ignorant man, for he was well brought up," said Matthew, dubiously. "'Twas only wildness that made him a soldier, and maids rather like your man of sin."

"Now, Cain Ball," said Gabriel restlessly, "can you swear in the most awful form that the woman you saw was Miss Everdene?"

"Cain Ball, you are no longer a babe and suckling," said Joseph in the sepulchral tone the circumstances demanded, "and you know what taking an oath is. 'Tis a horrible testament, mind ye, which you say and seal with your blood-stone, and the prophet Matthew tells us that on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder. Now, before all the work-folk here assembled can you swear to your words as the shepherd asks ye?"

"Please no, Mister Oak!" said Cainy, looking from one to the other with great uneasiness at the spiritual magnitude of the position. "I don't mind saying 'tis true, but I don't like to say 'tis d—— true, if that's what you mane."

"Cain, Cain, how can you!" said Joseph sternly. "You are asked to swear in a holy manner, and you swear like wicked Shimei, the son of Gera, who cursed as he came. Young man, fie!"

"No, I don't! 'Tis you want to squander a pore boy's soul, Joseph Poorgrass—that's what 'tis!" said Cain, beginning to cry. "All I mane is that in common truth 'twas Miss Everdene and Sergeant Troy, but in the horrible so-help-me truth that ye want to make of it perhaps 'twas somebody else."

"There's no getting at the rights of it," said Gabriel, turning to his work.

"Cain Ball, you'll come to a bit of bread!" groaned Joseph Poorgrass.

Then the reapers' hooks were flourished again, and the old sounds went on. Gabriel, without making any pretence of being lively, did nothing to show that he was particularly dull. However, Coggan knew pretty nearly how the land lay, and when they were in a nook together he said—

"Don't take on about her, Gabriel. What difference does it make whose sweetheart she is, since she can't be yours?"

"That's the very thing I say to myself," said Gabriel.

Chapman's Dramatic Works.*

It is a fair question for the curious, why the comedies and tragedies of one of the greatest of the Elizabethan dramatists have never been printed in a complete form until now. Some of them, in fact, are altogether lost, and most of them have never attained the dignity of a second edition. And now that we have them all before us, this very edition recalls the remarkable fact, that Shakspeare alone, of all the dramatic writers who wrote under Elizabeth, James, and Charles, can be named as an English classic. More than this, there is no other English play-writer, except (strangely enough) Sheridan, who can take his place among English classics. For by a classic must be meant, not merely one whose works are read by those who study the literature of a country in its completeness, but one who is a classic in the sense that the Greek dramatists are classics, and that Shakspeare, Bacon, and Milton are classics. In this sense the whole race of English dramatists, so great and popular in their day, of whom Ben Jonson and Chapman are among the earlier types, and Dryden one of the later, can hardly be numbered among those who still help to form the existing English mind. To the ordinary English gentleman they are known only by extracts.

Nor are the causes of this failure to ensure immortality very obvious at first sight. One cause which is commonly cited is by no means sufficient to account for the fact. It is commonly said that the old plays are licentious and broad, and that it is our modern delicacy, or prudery, or fastidiousness, call it which we will, which has condemned the older writers to oblivion. Yet this can hardly be the whole case, for who can be more "broad" than Chaucer in some of his *Canterbury Tales?* Yet Chaucer is undeniably an English classic. He is broad, not only in the extreme plainness with which he calls a spade a spade, but he is broad in the very substance of some of his stories themselves. Our modern plays, too, are often broad enough in their plots and in their *doubles entendres*; and it is manifest that the supposed delicacy of mind which forbids the reprinting of the elder plays, or of Wycherley, or Congreve, or Vanbrugh, or Beaumont and Fletcher, for miscellaneous family reading, is not a little the result of that utter hypocrisy which pervades our popular talk and popular belief in all matters of religion and morals. There is no harm in the world, it is thought, in the singing of "*La ci darem*" in the most

* *The Comedies and Tragedies of George Chapman*, now first collected, with Illustrative Notes and a Memoir of the Author. In Three Volumes. London: John Pearson, York Street, Covent Garden, 1873.

respectably rigid of drawing-rooms; but then are not the words in Italian, and is not the music by the "divine Mozart?" So it is with another of the divine Mozart's whole operas, *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Is it not all in Italian? Or, in other words, is it not all a *double entendre* from beginning to end, which the mammas may understand, but not the more innocent members of proper society? The ballet-girl of the period is, indeed, by no means a *double entendre*, and she is a phenomenon to be carefully studied by those who would estimate the sincerity of the religious professions of the age we are living in.

Here, in truth, are two of the most striking illustrations of the difference between the social ideas of the ages of Elizabeth and Victoria. Under Elizabeth and James we have the talk of Holywell Street uttered by players of the male sex alone, for the appearance of women upon the stage was unknown: under Victoria we have the most highly improving sentiments lisped by women in men's clothing, supported by clouds of ballet-dancers, who, whether they are dressed in male or female clothing, are invariably girls. What a marvellous change in the notions of society as to what is moral! And what a honeycombing of scepticism does it not betray in our modern world as to the real standard of right and wrong!

Then there is another curious circumstance about the dramatists of the Tudor and Stuart period. They furnish but a very slight reflection of the theological and political strifes of the times. It has even been maintained that Shakspeare was a Roman Catholic, and entirely as the proof fails, it is sufficiently suggestive that the attempt to prove him one should ever have been made. No doubt the chief actors in London being the "King's players," or the "Queen's players," they had singularly little liberty for expressing any political sentiments which they might have held. How little that liberty was, may be gathered from one of the few adventures that chequered the life of George Chapman. In conjunction with Ben Jonson and Marston he wrote the comedy of *Eastward Hoe* in the first year of James the First's reign. In this play they indulged in a few of those reflections upon the Scotch, which were then so popular among English people; and "Gentle Jamie," in his wrath, sent all the three poets to the Fleet, where they were very nearly undergoing the characteristic gentle penalty of those days, in having their noses slit. Drummond says that Jonson declared that he had no hand in writing the offending passages, but that he would not desert his friends in their trouble, and went to prison with them. As it was, James, who was more forgiving than is usual with cowards, soon set all three at liberty, and took to admiring Chapman's writings, and made no objection to the patronage which his son Henry Prince of Wales bestowed upon him.

That the king ever saw or heard of the speech in praise of tobacco in the comedy of *Monsieur D'Olive*, which Chapman wrote soon afterwards, is hardly to be believed. If he did see it, and yet continued his tolerance of the writer, or allowed it to be acted, only proves that his hatred of tobacco was less deep than his fondness for the Scotch. The speech

is so amusing in itself, and so characteristic of Chapman when he was in his comic vein, that we must extract it as it stands, only taking the liberty of spelling it as people now spell. The editor of the present edition, on the contrary, has preserved the spelling of 1606, a proceeding which will by no means tend to popularise the poet with modern readers, and strikes as not a little pedantic. There is good reason for retaining the original spelling of Chaucer, for his English was not our English; and there are philological reasons which forbid the modernising of his spelling as a barbarism. But there is no more reason for spelling Chapman otherwise than as we spell the language which he wrote, than for performing the same operation with Shakspeare. For the same reason, is there not a little pedantry in printing the title-page of the book without any punctuation whatever, as if it were a Latin inscription eighteen hundred years old? Here, however, is Monsieur D'Olive in modern trim, deserving, in these days of illuminated quotations, to be hung up in the smoking-room of every club in London.

"Tobacco," says he, "that excellent plant, the use whereof (as of fifth element) the world cannot want, is that little shop of nature, wherein her whole workmanship is abridged, where you may see earth kindled into fire, the fire breathe out an exhalation, which entering in at the mouth walks through the regions of a man's brain, drives out all ill vapours, but itself draws down all bad humours by the mouth, which in time might breed a scab over the whole body, if indeed they have not; a plant of singular use, for on the one side, nature being an enemy to vacuity and emptiness, and on the other, there being so many empty brains in the world as there are, how shall nature's course be continued? How shall these empty brains be filled, but with air, nature's instrument for that purpose? If with air, what so proper as your fume? what fume so healthful as your perfume? what perfume so sovereign as tobacco? Besides the excellent edge it gives a man's wit (as they can best judge that have been present at a feast of tobacco, where commonly all good wits are consorted), what variety of discourse it begets! What sparks of wit it yields it is a world to hear . . . For garlick, I will not say, because it is a plant of our own country, but it may cure the diseases of the country, but for the diseases of the Court, they are out of the element of garlick to medicine. To conclude, as there is no enemy to garlick but tobacco, so there is no friend to garlick but a sheep's head; and so I conclude."

Another notable characteristic of the early dramatists is their almost complete abstinence from the religious conflicts which were waging all around them. Those conflicts were never lulled. The ferocity of the antagonism between Protestant and Catholic was succeeded by a bitterness, almost fiercer still, between the Puritan and the Anti-Puritan. As the country gradually attained prosperity under Elizabeth, and remained prosperous under James, the hatreds of the two parties entered more and more into the social and family life of the people. To the vast mass of

the people, who cared little whether or not they outwardly conformed to the new religion, it was a serious matter whether their dress, their amusements and their marriage arrangements should be dictated by the new rigorism, or whether the old jovial ways of the country should be left untouched. In fact, under James the struggle was beginning to take a far more distinctly religious character than it possessed during the professedly Reformation struggle. Nobody can study the real character of that struggle, without seeing that the purely religious element had wonderfully little to do with the conduct of either side.

But under James the whole country was seething with personal hatreds and personal convictions tending to a vehement civil war in which the victory was finally won by the party which would vigorously put down all plays and play-acting as the work of the devil himself. Yet, neither in the comedies nor the tragedies of the day do we find anything that can be called a picture, or even caricature, of the passions that were burning throughout the country. Here and there passages and characters may be found which were more or less suggested by the theological antipathies which were soon to set Englishmen cutting each other's throats; but that is all.

Nor can we attribute this silence as to the polemics of the time to any of that sort of fastidiousness or good feeling which now banishes such matters from the stage. Fastidiousness was unknown to the men and also to the women of that vigorous age. They said what they thought, and they said it with a strength of language which would make our women blush, and our men open their eyes, if such sounds were now to strike their ears. The famous *Histrio-Mastix, or Scourge for Stage Players*, which Prynne published in 1632, is at once a token of the hatred with which the Puritans regarded everything connected with the play-house, and of the gall, unmingled with honey, with which each side bespattered its antagonists. Chapman was still alive and a very old man. The style of the *Scourge* is as coarse and scurrilous as anything that the age produced, and if anything could have stirred the dramatic writers to a frenzy of reprisals, Prynne's pamphlet was precisely the thing to do it.

But what is most notable, as enabling us to treat the plays of the time from the purely critical point of view, is the fact which everybody knows, that the *Histrio-Mastix* was at once made the subject of a Government prosecution. Prynne was already odious in the eyes of Laud and the rest of the High Church party, both from his ecclesiastical views and his moral rigorism, and from the untiring energy with which he annoyed the Archbishop and his friends of the ultra "Apostolical Succession" school. But he had now contrived to exasperate the Court and the courtiers past all bearing. Plays and masques and other amusements, such as we should now call private theatricals, were among the most fashionable of amusements, the Queen herself having acted in a pastoral at Somerset Ho[illegible] Whether or not Prynne expected what befell him cannot be know[illegible] but when he had made both an archbishop and a queen his special enemies, he might have anticipated as savage a punish-

ment as those hard-hitting times delighted to inflict. And a tolerably severe penalty he had to pay. The attorney-general prosecuted him in the Star Chamber, and he was sentenced to pay a fine of 3,000*l.*, to be expelled from the University of Oxford and the Society of Lincoln's Inn; to be degraded from the bar; to be twice set in the pillory; to have both his ears cut off; and to be imprisoned for life.

Here, then, we think we have the key to the interesting literary problem which must have often occurred to students of the old dramatists, and particularly to those who take up the plays of Chapman himself. The tragedies and comedies which have come down to us from those stormy times were, in no sense, the dramatic literature of the nation. They were the dramatic literature of the Court and its fashionable followers; and they were not only tolerable in their completeness, but often admirable in the eyes of that exclusive world. The plays in which the multitude delighted were more like the old moralities and mysteries which had come down to them from the pre-Reformation days, in which coarse buffoonery was the predominant element, and no trace of poetry was ever to be detected. The lords and ladies who applauded these plays, at the same time that they applauded Shakspeare's, were almost the only people in the country who could understand the unquestionable poetic beauties of these dramatists, without being repelled by their faults, as plays professing to represent the actual life of men and women. Their education was sometimes very much above the average education of the fine ladies and gentlemen who now throng the operas in London, when one popular star is singing her utmost to outsing another popular star. They had not yet come down to that depth of dulness which has so long stigmatised a classical education as unfit for women, and especially for women of what is called "birth and fortune." Often, as appears from a passage of Chapman, many of the aristocratic audience would sit upon the stage itself, and the acting and speaking were criticised from that strictly literary point of view which is practically unknown to the living generation of play-goers.

The dramas of Chapman and the other contemporaries and followers of Shakspeare were thus the representatives of that transition state of public taste, which was the natural result of the abolition of the miracle plays and gross absurdities of the middle ages. Critics and dramatists alike had not yet realised the truth that a play ought, above all things, to be an exhibition of the passions and motives of human nature, as it is in its essence, in every stage of civilisation. A wonderful burst of the genuine poetic fervour had accompanied the growth of the English people as a Protestant and freedom-loving race, but the educated world had yet to learn under what conditions the poem could become the play; and was contented with poetic beauties in whatsoever companionship they found them.

It is to no purpose to name the great name of Shakspeare in opposition to this view. He stood alone then, just as he stands alone in the

literature of the whole world. He belonged to no school, just as none of those who were his contemporaries belonged to him. It was his intensely sympathetic conception of the varieties of human nature, not as embodiments of ideal conceptions, but as living realities, which made him what he was, and which separates him by an impassable barrier from every one who wrote when he wrote, or who has written since he died. The only real anticipation of the perfect "humanity" of Shakspeare is to be detected in the old Greek tragedy and comedy, and of that tragedy and comedy Shakspeare himself knew nothing. But it is immortal, and for the very same reason that has given Shakspeare his immortality. It is, as we think, an error to criticise the plays of Shakspeare in any close connection with those of his contemporaries and those of the generation that lived after him. They belonged to the school of their day, but he belonged to no school whatsoever. That he would have been what he was if he had lived before the Reformation had set Englishmen free, and while the English language was still unformed, is not, of course, to be maintained. But at the same time, he stood as completely apart from the fashionable school of his day, of which Chapman is, perhaps, the most typical representative, as from the boisterous, coarse, and extravagant plays, which constituted the enjoyment of the multitude.

Nor, again, is there any historical ground for believing, that Shakspeare was ever a favourite dramatist with the miscellaneous multitude, as is so often assumed by writers who mourn over the "decay of the British drama." Whether in connection with the Elizabethan or the Tudor dramatists there has been a general consent among critics to lament over the fact that the Shakspearian tragedies and comedies are now no longer those which the English nation at large flocks to hear and see. But this lament, so far as it blames this present generation, has no foundation in the facts of the past. There is no ground for supposing that he was ever valued by the people as he is now loved by the critical readers of England, and Germany, and Italy, and even of France. Among his own contemporaries he was doubtless accounted the first among all the writers whom the Court applauded; but there never was a period in the history of England when his plays were presented to an audience like that of the Greeks who witnessed the representations of Æschylus, and Sophocles, and Aristophanes, and Euripides.

In truth, the moment we pass from Shakspeare to Chapman and all others, we feel that we are in another world, and we understand at once that while Shakspeare is still acted, and would be still more frequently acted if anything like a tolerably complete company could be found to act him, Chapman, Ben Jonson, Marston, and the rest, are still the delight of students only, and that the general reader will only love them because of the beauties which are enshrined in an intolerable quantity of the unnatural, forced and pedantic theatricalisms of their day. Even the more modern comedies of a later time, of which Vanbrugh and Wycherley may be named as typical examples, are banished from the drawing-room table

as well as from the theatre, not only because of the tone of their plots and the freedom of their dialogue, but because there is little of any true naturalness in their characters, and they appeal more to the artificial tastes of an audience of fine ladies and gentlemen than to the sympathies of that humanity which is common to every age and every class.

There can be no doubt that the courtier audiences who went to see and to enjoy plays like those of Chapman, sought an enjoyment very unlike that which everybody seeks who now goes to the play or to the opera. They went in cool blood to criticise, to applaud, to enjoy, or to condemn. They were satisfied with fine or poetic passages, even though the general course of the play and the dialogue was unnatural in the extreme. They loved an exhibition of what in those days was "learning" in the play-writer. And this fondness for the introduction of classical history and mythology was not that ridiculous pedantry which we should now account it. It was not Chapman alone who, through his translation of Homer, had his head filled with the ideas and machinery of the Greek Olympus, and seemed to be as much at home among heroes, gods, and goddesses as among living men and women. It was the same with other play-writers of the day. A familiarity with the literature of Greece and Rome was the one recognised sign that the writer was an educated man. There were no other tokens of high culture which the playwright could exhibit; while the very language that he wrote was still clearing itself of its mediæval forms, and of the cumbrous and stilted metaphors which it had borrowed from the Italian renaissance. Under Elizabeth and James the English language and English literature were emphatically creating themselves, and thus it was that the plays of the time are to be estimated rather by the jewels which may be extracted from them, than by their general quality or completeness.

This is singularly the case with Chapman, of whom Charles Lamb has happily said that "he would have made a great epic poet, if he has not abundantly shown himself to be one; for his Homer is not so properly a translation as the stories of Achilles and Ulysses re-written." It is remarkable, at the same time, that Lamb, in the short criticism which he has prefixed to the quotation from Chapman, in his *Specimen of English Dramatic Poets*, confines his remarks almost entirely to his style, while admitting at the same time his inability to create a living human being. In passages "which are less purely dramatic," Lamb holds, and, as we think, justly, that of all the English play-writers Chapman approaches the nearest to Shakspeare.

Even in *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, the earliest of his plays that are not lost, and a very poor performance indeed, it seems wonderful to light upon passages like these following:—

> Though my years would have me old, I am not,
> But have the gentle jerk of youth in me,
> As fresh as he that hath a maiden's chin.

Delicious love
Hath been the fig I ate before this wine,
Which kills the taste of these delicious cates.

The next is quaint and slightly "long drawn out," but it is beautiful nevertheless :—

Head-tires enchased in order like the stars,
With perfect great and fine-cut precious stones,
One hath bright Ariadne's crown in it,
Even in the figure it presents in heaven ;
Another hath the fingers of Diana,
And Berenice's ever-beaming hair ;
Another hath the bright Andromeda,
With both her silver wrists bound to a rock,
And Perseus that did loose her to save her life,
All set in number, and in perfect form,
Even like the asterisms fixt in heaven,
And even as you may see in moonshine nights,
The moon and stars reflecting in their streams.

The next play that Chapman wrote is better in construction, and not so impossible. The dialogue, too, is more easy and natural. But it is only by comparison that the story is less impossible than that of *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* and its "breadth" is startling, and shows what a gulf separates the higher classes of English society from the lords and ladies who, under Elizabeth, sat and enjoyed its extremely plain speaking. It supplies, too, a curious illustration of the fashionable learning of the day, and shows that King James was by no means so singular in his pedantic displays as we are tempted to imagine him. It must have been an odd time, indeed, when a young lord would thus soliloquise and apostrophise "Marc Cicero" :—

"*Quid Dei potes videri magnum in rebus humanis quæ æterni omnes* to thy *notas sic omnibus magna tutor.* What can seem strange to him on earthly things to whom the whole course of eternity and the round compass of the world is known? A speech divine; but yet I marvel much how it should spring from thee, Mark Cicero, that sold for glory the sweet peace of life, and make a torment of rich nature's work, wearing thyself by watchful candle-light, when all the smiths and weavers were at rest, and yet was gallant when the lay-bird sung to have a troop of clients at thy gates, armed with religious supplications, such as would make stern Minos laugh to read. Look at our lawyers' bills; not one contains virtue or honest drifts, but he cares, he cares, he cares; for acorns now are in request, but the oak's poor fruit did nourish men; men were like oaks of body, tough and strong; men were like giants then, but pigmies now, but full of villanies as their skin could hold."

This was the kind of classical knowledge which Chapman and others brought from the Oxford and Cambridge of the sixteenth century. He himself passed some time in residence at both of the Universities. "In 1574, or thereabouts," says Wood in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, "he being

well grounded in school learning, was sent to the University, but whether first to this of Oxon, or that of Cambridge, is to me unknown. Sure I am that he spent some time in Oxon, where he was observed to be most excellent in the Latin and Greek tongues, but not in logic or philosophy, and therefore I presume that that was the reason why he took no degree here." Warton says much the same in his *History of English Poetry*, stating that Chapman "passed two years at Trinity College, Oxford, with a contempt of philosophy, but in close attention to the Greek and Roman classics."

And herein, judging from our point of view, he acted wisely. What they called logic and philosophy in those days was in truth but a mere display of verbal wordsplitting. Aldrich was yet unborn, and the *Barbara Cælarent*, which distressed our youthful memories, was known only in the treatises on the scholastic logic which had survived all the changes in religious belief. While Aldrich is now set aside as a mere teacher of artificial intellectual jugglery, what must have been the logic, and with it the philosophy, which Oxford offered three centuries ago to her children? It is necessary, indeed, to remember what was the condition of the scholastic logic in the days when Chapman was an undergraduate in order to understand the taste for quibbling, which was so common with many of the Elizabethan dramatists, and which is not altogether absent from Shakspeare, though Shakspeare was never at either University. The scholastic logic and philosophy, even when at their best, were a dreary substitution of the art of playing with words for the art of thinking. But what must they have been in their decay, when the Reformation had destroyed the *raison d'être* of the professors of the art itself, and it merely lingered as a conservative element in the University curriculum? How obstinately it thus lingered is to be judged from the fact that until Whately hinted at the true art, which John Stuart Mill afterwards developed, the one standard classic was Aldrich, to whose authority Oxford bowed down as if the admirable and accomplished Dean of Christchurch was as great in the science of logic as he was in music and architecture.

It is not, however, in his plays so much as in his translation of Homer that Chapman shows how lovingly he had read the old Greeks and Romans. On this translation he worked, after the completion of the *Humorous Day's Mirth*, not returning to the stage for six years to come. This translation is usually thought by far his greatest work, and whatever be its merits as a translation, according to our modern standards of translation, it has unquestionably been *felt* as a work of real genius by many who cared little for any purely critical standard as to what constitutes a strict translation. Keats declared that to him the first reading of Chapman's *Homer* was like the discovery of a new planet by an astronomer gazing into the skies. Pope offered it a more qualified homage, and wished to "damn it with faint praise," declaring that it was a work that Homer might have written before coming to years of

discretion; but Waller said that he could never read it without a degree of rapture.

The *Iliad* was reprinted in 1843, but we fancy that it is now little known, even to scholars, and we wonder that with the *Odyssey* and one or two other of his classical works it is not now reprinted by one of those enterprising publishers, who love to reprint old books, rather for love than for money. As for conveying to the unlearned reader any true conception of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of the real Homer himself, every scholar who is not bitten with an inevitable love for translating, knows that it is an impossibility. Everybody knows what the Psalms in prose, themselves a translation, have suffered at the hands of the versifiers. Let the unlearned in Greek meditate on this, and be satisfied that there is only one way to comprehend the infinite charm of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and that is, to learn to read them with care in Greek. Let them think on Tate and Brady, and Sternhold and Hopkins, and even Keble, and the old Scotch version, and then form their conclusions as to translations from any of the Greek poets. At the same time, if their passion for knowing something of Homer is insurmountable, they ought to add Chapman's version to all the rest; only let them not think that either Chapman, or Pope, or Cowper, or Lord Derby, or anybody else *is* Homer himself.

As soon as his translating labours were over Chapman returned, as we have said, to play-writing, and learnt what it was to be shut up in the Fleet by will of the king. One of his best comedies followed his liberation. *All Fools* is one of those comedies which are only not farces, because of the merit of their dialogue, and the less absolute improbability of their story. Here is the ever popular plot of the universal misunderstandings and the trickeries of all the dramatis personæ, but sustained by a dialogue, often rich and musical, and exhibiting that real poetic gift which appears in Chapman's prose almost as in his verse. Few writers, indeed, could be named whose prose runs almost imperceptibly into verse, and in whom the occasional alternations between verse and prose dialogue seem so little unnatural.

One of his next plays, *The Gentleman Usher*, contains one of his finest passages, and it must be quoted at length as an illustration of the sustained quality both of his verse and his ideas, and also in contrast with a piece of prose in which he writes about women in a strain far more like that which was popular among the play-writers, and, which comes to the same thing, the audiences of his day. Thus it is that he makes Strozzi address his wife Cynanche:

> Come near me, wife; I fare the better far
> For the sweet food of thy divine advice.
> Let no man value at a little price
> A virtuous woman's counsel; her wing'd spirit
> Is feathered oftentimes with heavenly words;
> And like her beauty, ravishing and pure.
> The weaker body, still the stronger soul,
> When good endeavours do her powers apply,

Her love draws nearest man's felicity.
Oh, what a treasure is a virtuous wife,
Discreet and loving; not one gift on earth
Makes a man's life so highly bound to heaven.
She gives him double forces to endure
And to enjoy, by being one with him;
Feeling his joys and griefs with equal sense;
And like the twins Hippocrates reports,
If he fetch sighs, she draws her breath as short;
If he lament, she melts herself in tears;
If he be glad she triumphs; if he stir
She moves his way; in all things his sweet ape,
And is in alteration passing strange.
Gold is right precious; but his price infects
With pride and avarice; Authority lifts
Hats from men's heads, and bows the strongest knees,
Yet cannot bend in rule the weakest hearts;
Music delights but one sense, nor choice meats;
One quickly fades, the others stir to sin.
But a true wife, both sense and soul delights,
And mixeth not her good with any ill;
Her virtues, ruling hearts, all powers command;
All store, without her, leaves a man but poor,
And with her, poverty is exceeding store;
No time is tedious with her, her true worth
Makes a true husband think his arms enfold,
With her alone, a complete world engold.

Surely such verse as this, with all its bit of quaintness, is poetry as Lamb said, of the true Shakspearean metal. But whether the fine ladies and gentlemen of those free and easy days loved it as well as the subjoined piece of prose from the comedy of *May Day*, may well be doubted. This is the way that Ludovico advises his friend Aurelio to press his suit with a woman:—"She shall endure thee; do the worst thou canst to her; aye, and endure thee till thou canst not endure her. But then thou must use thyself like a wise man, and a wise man, how deep soever she is in thy thoughts, carry not the print of it in thy looks; be bold and careless, and stand not sauntering afar off, as I have seen you, like a dog in a furmety pot, that licks his chops and wags his tail, and fain would lay his lips to it, but he fears 'tis too hot for him; that's the only way to make her too hot for thee. He that holds religious and sacred thoughts of a woman, he that bears so reverend a respect to her, that he will not touch her but with a kissed hand and a timorous heart; he that adores her like his goddess, let him be sure that she will shun him like her slave. Alas, good souls, women of themselves are tractable and tactable enough, and would return *Quid* for *Quod* still, but we are they that spoil 'em, and we shall answer for't another day. We are they that put a kind of wanton melancholy into 'em, that makes 'em think their noses bigger than their faces, greater than the sun in brightness; and whereas nature made 'em but half fools, we make 'em all fool. And this is our palpable flattery of them, where they had rather have plain dealing."

Of Chapman's tragedies, the most characteristic are the four semi-historical plays, *Bussy d'Ambois*, *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois*, *Byron's Conspiracy*, and *Byron's Tragedy*. In reality they are dramatic poems rather than dramas; Chapman's failure in inventing real living men and women being more conspicuous in tragedy than in comedy. No one can deny their bombast; but that any competent critic, or any real poet, could detect nothing in them but bombast, is astonishing. Dryden's criticism especially deserves quoting, partly as a master-piece of vilification, and partly as an illustration of what can be written against bombast by a great poet who could himself descend to the lowest bombastic level. Jealousy there could be none, except that *Bussy d'Ambois* was still sometimes played on the London stage. The quotation also may be profitably compared with the current theatrical newspaper criticisms of to-day, of which it may safely be said that not one word will ever be read a score of years hence. Thus, then, writes Dryden:—"I have sometimes wondered in the reading, what was become of those glaring colours which amazed me in *Bussy d'Amloir* upon the theatre; but when I had taken up what I supposed a fallen star, I found I had been cozened with a jelly; nothing but a cold, dull mass, which glittered no longer than when it was shooting; a dwarfish thought, dressed up in gigantic words, repetition in abundance, looseness of expression, and gross hyperbole; the sense of one line expanded prodigiously into ten; and, to sum up all, incorrect English, and a hideous mingle of false poetry and true nonsense; or at best, a scantling of wit, which lay gasping for life, and groaning beneath a heap of rubbish. A famous modern poet used to sacrifice every year a Statius to Virgil's Manes; and I have indignation enough to burn a *D'Ambois* annually to the memory of Jonson." This comes from the *Epistle Dedicatory* to *The Spanish Fryar*, and is indeed a very master-piece of vituperation. Walter Scott, too, editing *The Spanish Fryar*, adds his own opinion, that "if Dryden could have exhausted every copy of this bombast performance, the public would have been no great losers." Yet in this play is a passage which may rank with Dryden's finest bursts of angry and most expressive metaphor:—

> Your voice
> Is like an Eastern wind, that where it flies,
> Knits nets of caterpillars, with which you catch
> The prime of all the fruit the kingdom yields.
> You have a tongue so scandalous, 'twill cut
> A perfect crystal; and a breath that will
> Kill to that wall a spider.

Less ambitious in plan were some of Chapman's later performances. The *May Day* and *The Widow's Tears* (in the latter of which we have him by no means glorifying women in general and widows in particular) were published in 1611 and 1612. In 1613, on occasion of the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth with the Palsgrave, the Societies of Lincoln's Inn and the Middle Temple showed their loyalty by exhibiting a superb

masque at Whitehall, at the cost of more than 1,000*l.* for which Chapman wrote the verses, and Inigo Jones designed the machinery. Of Chapman's gifts in the way of writing such trifles, Jonson thought highly, for he said to Drummond that "next himself, only Fletcher and Chapman could make a masque."

After this Chapman returned to his beloved translations, including Hesiod, Juvenal, Musæus and Petrarch. Many years afterwards he wrote his tragedy of *Cæsar and Pompey*. And then "at length," writes Wood, "this most eminent and reverend poet, having lived seventy-seven years in this vain and transitory world, made his last exit in the parish of St. Giles' in the Fields, near London," and over his grave was set a monument by his friend Inigo Jones, in which he is styled *poeta Homericus, Philosophus verus, etsi Christianus poeta plus quam celebris*. Compare this with the views concerning Chapman and his contemporaries for which Prynne lost his ears, his 3,000*l.*, and his liberty for life.

Modern Sorcery.

Had someone stood under the crystal dome of the first great Exhibition, and foretold that in a quarter of a century after that inauguration of the millennium of common sense, England would incur the denunciations of the Hebrew prophets on a land of wizards and necromancers, and of those who "seek after familiar spirits," how merrily should we have laughed the absurd prediction to scorn! Not much more attention should we have paid to it even had we known that just three years before (in 1848) Miss Kate Fox, of Hydesville, State of New York, at the mature age of nine, had received monitions from the spirit world in the form of a hail-storm of raps on the walls and floors of her abode. It seemed, indeed, scarcely more likely that the juvenile "medium" should open a new dispensation for Europe and America, than that her contemporary little visionaries (or naughty little impostors, as the case may be) of La Salette should send half France on pious pilgrimage to the spot where they saw, or did not see, the Virgin. The lesson that great events may spring from small causes, and that the foolish things of the world not seldom confound the wise, is, however, by no means a new one for mankind, and we have now very plainly to reckon with Spiritualism as one of the prominent facts of the age. We will not take upon ourselves to guess how many disciples it may boast in America before these sheets pass to the press; a few millions, more or less, seem to count for little in the statements of its triumphant advocates; but here, in England, there are evidences enough of its flourishing condition. In nearly every company may be met at least one lady or gentleman who looks grave and uncomfortable when the subject is treated with levity; confesses to a conviction that there is "something in it;" and challenges disproof of miracles which she or he has actually beheld, heard, and handled. Not seldom are to be seen persons in a later stage of faith, easily recognisable by wild and vision-seeking eyes, and hands and feet in perpetual nervous agitation, who take no interest in other conversation, but eagerly pour out narratives, arguments, and appeals concerning Spiritualism whenever they can make an opportunity introducing the subject. Even the pulpit is no longer free from spiritualistic interpretations of religious mysteries; and the periodical press, which long confined itself to such attacks and refutations as those by Lord Amberley, in the *Fortnightly Review*, by an anonymous writer in the *New Quarterly Magazine*, and by a well-known physiologist in the *Quarterly Review* (October, 1871), has now opened its columns to two very remarkable papers in its defence, by Dr. Alfred Wallace (*Fortnightly*

Review, May and June, 1874). This double essay, indeed, by the distinguished traveller and fellow-originator with Dr. Darwin of the "Doctrine of Natural Selection," may be justly said to mark an epoch in the progress of the movement, and we can scarcely do wrong in taking it as the first serious challenge to us from competent authority, to give to the marvels of Spiritualism a fair and full investigation.

To many readers, indeed, we believe it has not unsuccessfully so appealed; causing them to hesitate as to whether they were justified in holding back any longer from enquiry, even while the process remains to them eminently distasteful. In view of such a dilemma it may be not inopportune to discuss briefly, *not* the Evidences of Spiritualism, but the preliminary question—Whether we are intellectually or morally bound to examine and weigh those evidences? Spiritualists, to do them justice, very candidly warn us that the task is no trivial one to be performed in a hurry. They scoff indignantly at the notion that five unsuccessful *séances* (in one of which Di Vernon appeared as an historical character, and, in another, Socrates with a straight nose and a disinclination to speak Greek) were sufficient to warrant Lord Amberley in pronouncing Spiritualism an imposition; and they bid us admire men who, like Dr. Sexton, are prepared to spend fifteen years in inquiry before the "needful evidence" to convince them is vouchsafed.* To sift and collate the mass of evidence already produced; to cross-examine the witnesses, and weigh the value of their individual testimony; finally, to institute the requisite actual experiments at *séances* innumerable, would be to exceed the labours of Hercules, and repeat the weariness of the Tichborne trial. It is not too much to insist that excellent reason should be shown for the devotion of so much time and toil to such an end; nor need we be alarmed at the adoption by Spiritualists of the tone of high moral indignation against indolent non-inquirers, natural to all persons who think they are advocating some important discovery. Few amongst us who have reached middle life regret that we did not obey the solicitations of early friends to devote the years of our prime to investigations of the "discoveries" of St. John Long, Spurzheim, and Reichenbach,—to testing the therapeutic agencies of tar-water, "tracttors," and brandy and salt; or nicely studying the successive solutions triumphantly propounded of the problem of human flight and of perpetual motion. We have borne with tolerable equanimity to be called hasty and prejudiced in these matters; and we may now endure the taunt of Spiritualists that we display indifference to truths possibly indefinitely valuable to the human race. *Some* limits there must needs be to the duty of inquiring into everything proposed to us as a subject of investigation; and those limits we may perhaps in the present case find in the nature of the subject, the methods of the investigation to be pursued, and the results which follow in the contingency of such inquiries proving successful.

* *Quarterly Review*, May 1874, p. 651.

The propensity which ethnologists attribute, especially to Touranian races, to seek after intercourse with inferior grades of spiritual existence, or (to give it the old name) the passion for Sorcery, is one which seems to flourish like the olive, the Phœnix of trees. Cut down, or burnt down, in one land or age, it springs up and branches forth afresh in the next; and while the main tendency of human thought seems constantly towards a stricter monotheism, a counter eddy of the current for ever fills and re-fills the invisible world with legions of imps, ghosts, and lying spirits, meaner and more puerile than human nature in its basest condition. Fifty years ago such delusions seemed to have ebbed out, and the few writers who dealt with them, spoke of them as things of the past; and assured us that, save in some Tartar tent in the East, or Gipsy one in the West, magic and incantations would be heard no more. The future historian of the England of to-day may truly relate that such incantations were more common in London in 1874 than they were in Palestine when the witch of Endor deluded Saul; or in Byzantium, when Santabaren restored his long lost son to the arms of the Emperor Basil the Macedonian.*

What is the origin of this widespread and seemingly ineradicable propensity? Of course the answer which first suggests itself is, that it is the result of a most natural and blameless curiosity to learn the mysteries of that life into which we ourselves expect to pass through the gates of the tomb, and wherein it is our hope that the beloved ones who have left us have already entered. That in some cases this is the real spring of the desire, we will not question. But it is certain that the passion for Sorcery has far other springs beside, and that those who addict themselves to it most completely have neither ardent longings for immortality on their own account, nor common reverence for the dead. The special characteristic of the propensity, and of the practices to which it gives rise, is the *absence* of all the more delicate sentiments or spiritual aspirations of true human love, or true religion; and the presence, in their stead, of a brutal familiarity and irreverence as regards the dead, and of a gross materialism touching the experiences of communion, divine or human.

In this respect superstitious Sacerdotalism and Sorcery have in all ages borne some strong features of resemblance, even while mutually denouncing one another. Each of them disregards really spiritual gifts as needful to qualify Priest or Medium for intercourse with the unseen world; and relies upon rites and incantations, rather than upon such liftings-up of the human soul in longing and prayer, as should draw (if anything might draw) the Divine aid from heaven and human love back from the grave. The Sacerdotalist forgets the truth that, not by the help of

* This latter marvel is vouched for by Leo Grammaticus *in vita Basilii Imp.*, § 20. It was obviously accomplished by phantasmagoria and a magic lanthorn. See, for a most valuable explanation of a multitude of such wonders, Eusebe Salverte's *Sciences Occultes*.

ecclesiastical machinery, but by spiritual worship, must the Father of Spirits be approached; and the Spiritualist forgets that not by his machinery of raps and alphabets, but indeed "spiritually," must "spiritual things" (such as immortality), be discerned. It was well said of late by a profound thinker, that "if our belief in a future life could be verified by the senses, Heaven would cease to be a part of our religion, and become a branch of our geography." "Spiritualism" is indeed a singular misnomer, or, rather, it is a case of *lucus a non lucendo*, for there is no "spirituality" in the system at all. It is materialism, pure and simple, applied to a spiritual truth.

No one who entertains natural reverence and awe for the dead can contemplate the practices of spiritualists in their *séances* without pain and indignation, and only the example of unfeeling mediums and excited friends can have prompted many tender natures to sanction or endure them. In the midnight silence and stillness of our chambers, or in some calm evening solitude of hills and woods, it might be possible to bear the overwhelming emotions of awe; the rush of unspeakable tenderness, which must come upon us with the genuine conviction that the one who was "soul of our soul" has actually returned from the grave, and is near us once more, conveying to us (as his presence even in silence would surely do) the ineffable sense of love triumphant over death; and ready to receive from us the passionate assurances of never-forgotten regret and affection. Such a meeting of the spirits of the dead and the living would be among all life's solemn and affecting incidents the most profound and touching; the one which would move us to the very foundations of our being, and leave us evermore other men than we had been. Nay, we may further conceive that, bending over the dying, and speaking to them of the world into which they are about to enter, and where it is at least not impossible they may meet our long lost friend or parent, we might with faltering lips charge them to bear for us to the dead the message of unchanged fidelity. Such as these are forms of communion with the departed which involve no shock to our reverence, no sin against the holiness of buried affection. But what shall we say for the travesty and mockery thereof which goes on at every spiritualistic *séance*, amid the circumstances with which we are all too well acquainted; and as an alternate evening diversion to music, cards, or tea? In a drawing-room with gas raised or extinguished a score of times to suit the requirements of the medium, amid a circle of pleasantly excited ladies and gentlemen dabbling with alphabets, and slates, and *planchettes*, and ready to catch up every straw of "evidence" to be published or gossiped about on the morrow; in such a scene as this, and with the aid of a *psychagogue*, who can scarcely pronounce three common-place sentences without betraying his ignorance or his vulgarity,* we are told that wives ask to com-

* Charles Sumner has just been brought back from the grave, and proves to have very quickly acquired that disregard of adverbs which is common among the weaker

municate with their dead husbands; parents are made to "feel" a lost child in their arms; and sons listen to words professedly spoken to them by their mother's souls. We do not need to be told that the communications thus made are utterly unworthy of the majesty of death, and are patently calculated rather to convince and entertain the audience by verifiable allusions to names and places, than to convey what—if it were truly the departed soul which had returned—would inevitably be the heart-wrung utterances of supreme love. Strange is it indeed that persons not otherwise devoid of tender and reverent feeling, when caught by the passion for this sorcery, permit themselves and the company they may happen to join; to find the entertainment of an evening in practice so revolting. Shall we give to it the name which it deserves, and say that the act of evoking the dead in such a manner, and for such a purpose, is *sacrilege*?

We have spoken of the objects and method of spiritualistic inquiry. Its results even more emphatically exonerate any man of sound and reverent mind from engaging in the task of its investigation. Dr. Wallace asks us to "look rather at the results produced by the evidence, than to the evidence itself," and we are thankful to accept his challenge. Never, we venture to say, may the principle of judging a tree by its fruits be more fairly applied. The grand and obvious result of Spiritualism is to afford us one more (real or fictitious) revelation of the state of departed souls, added to those which we possessed before. Let us consider it a little carefully, and observe what it really reveals.

The pictures of a future world which men have drawn in different lands and ages, all possess at least one claim to our interest. They afford us not indeed the faintest outlines of that Undiscovered Country beyond the bourne of death, but they reveal with unimpeachable, because unintentional sincerity, the innermost desires and fears of living men. On that "cloud" which receives every departing soul out of our sight, the magic-lantern of fancy casts its bright or gloomy imagery, and we need but watch the phantasms as they pass to know the hidden slides of the brain which produced them. The luscious gardens and Houris anticipated by the Moslem; the eternal repose of Nirvana sighed for by the Buddhist; the alternate warfare and wassail of Walhalla, for which the Norseman longed as the climax of glory and felicity, convey to us at a glance a livelier conception of the sensuality, the indolence, and the fierceness, of the respective races than could be acquired by elaborate studies of their manners and morality. In a similar way other characteristics are revealed by the terrors of Future Punishment,—which the lively Greek imagined to himself as the endless hopeless labours of an Ixion or a Sisyphus; the dignified Egyptian, as degradation to a bestial form; and the grim-souled Teuton of the Dark Ages, as eternal torture in a fiery

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brethren in America—and also, perhaps, among American mediums. He is reported to have said, "Oh, my friends, that you would ponder well that sacred injunction from spirit life, 'Lay up treasures in Heaven. You need not be told how to do this, you must *act unselfish*."

cave. Whatever has constituted man's highest pleasure on earth, *that* he has hoped to find again in heaven, and whatever he has most dreaded, *that* he has imagined as forming the retribution of guilt hereafter. From this point of view the Christian idea of a serene empyrean, wherein saints and archangels for ever cast their crowns before the great White Throne, and worship the thrice Holy One who sitteth thereon—affords singular evidence of the spiritual altitude to which those souls had attained to whom such an Apocalypse opened the supremest vision of beatitude. The attitude of Adoration—of sublime ecstatic rapture in the presence of perfect Holiness and Goodness, is assuredly the loftiest of which we have any conception, and to desire to enjoy and prolong it for ever can only genuinely pertain to a soul in which the love of Divine goodness is already the ruling passion. Wider thought and calmer reflection may teach that not alone on such mountain peaks of emotion, but on the plains of sacred service, should the faithful son of God desire to spend his immortality. But the modern American poet who has taken on himself to sneer at the notion of angels "loafing about the Throne," has given curious evidence of his incompetence to understand what sublime passion it was which inspired that wondrous vision of Patmos.

Accepting then the Heaven and Hell of each creed as a natural test of the characteristic sentiments of its disciples, we turn somewhat inquisitively to discover what sort of a future existence the new faith of Spiritualism proposes to give us. Of course it affords every facility for such an inquiry; for, while other religions teach primarily concerning God, and secondly, and with much more reserve, about the life after death; Spiritualism teaches first, and at great length, about the future life, and frankly confesses that it has no light to throw on the problems of theology. What then, we ask, has Spiritualism told us respecting the state of the dead, or rather (as a sceptic mustinwardly pose the question)—What do its narratives betray concerning the ideals of existence which Spiritualists have created out of the depth of their own consciousness? Do they prove an advance upon those of earlier creeds; or, on the contrary, do they mark a singular and deplorable retrogression towards the materialistic, the carnal, and the vulgar? Of course such an enquiry would be met at the outset by a Spiritualist with the vehement assertion that it was not he who devised what the spirits say of themselves, but the spirits who have lifted the veil of their own existence, for whose ignoble details he is in no way responsible. As, however, every Pagan and Buddhist, Mahometan and Parsee would say as much on his own behalf, and maintain that Elysium and Nirvana, Paradise and Gorotman, had each been revealed by such "mediums" as Orpheus and Buddha, Mahomet and Zoroaster, we must be content to pass by this argument and treat the phase of immortality discovered (or invented) by Mr. Hume and his friends, as no less significant of the moral ideals of Spiritualists and the general level of their aspirations.

Let it be granted cordially that there is nothing in the spiritualistic

Hades akin to the "Hell of the Red Hot Iron," the "Hell of the Little Child," the "Hell of the Burning Bonnet," and the "Hell of the Boiling Kettle" set forth with such ghastly circumstantiality in these latter days in Dr. Furness' *Books for the Young*, and in older times by numberless Calvinistic and Catholic divines. Theodore Parker went, indeed, so far as to say that "there was, at all events, one good service which the Spiritualists had done, *they had knocked the bottom out of Hell.*" Considering that the peculiarity of that terrible Pit has been generally understood to be that it is "bottomless," the achievement would seem rather difficult; but in any case we may candidly agree that on this side no exception need be taken against the spiritualist doctrine, save that perchance it fails to afford indication of any sense of how profound must be the mental anguish through which it is possible for a soul, stained with vice and cruelty, to recover its purity and peace. Spiritualist remorse seems almost as colourless as spiritualist beatitude is vulgar and inane.

On the other hand, when we ask to be informed (beyond the testimony of sweet smiles and assurances of felicity), of the nature of the happiness of virtuous departed souls, we are confronted with narratives much more nearly realizing our notion of humiliating penance and helplessness than of glory and freedom; of Purgatory rather than of Paradise. The dead, it seems, according to Spiritualism, have not (even after vast intervals of time) advanced one step nearer to the knowledge of those diviner truths for which the soul of man hungers, than they possessed while on earth. The Hope of Immortality is bound up, in religious minds, with the faith that though no actual vision can ever be vouchsafed of the all-pervading Spirit, yet that some sense beyond any which earthly life affords, of the presence and love of the Father will come to the soul when it has gone "home to God," and that Doubt will surely be left behind among the cerements of the grave. But Spiritualists cheerfully tell us such hopes are quite as delusive as those of the material crowns and harps of the New Jerusalem. "Nothing," says Dr. Wallace, "is more common than for religious people at *séances* to ask questions about God and Christ. In reply they never get more than opinions, or more frequently the statement that they, the spirits, have no more actual knowledge than they had on earth" (p. 805.) There are indeed, Dr. Wallace assures us, Catholic and Protestant, Mahommedan and Hindoo spirits, proving that the "mind with its myriad beliefs is not suddenly changed at death," nor, seemingly, for ages afterwards. Thus from our estimate of the Spiritualist state of future felicity, we are called on to make, at starting, the enormous deduction of everything resembling religious progress. The Spiritualist is perfectly content with an ideal Heaven wherein he will remain in just as much doubt or error as he happens to have entertained upon earth.

Further, as regards his personal and social affections, Does he at least image to himself that he will be nearer and more able to protect and bless his dear ones after death? Or that he will pass freely hither

and thither, doing service like a guardian angel to mankind, strengthening the weak, comforting the mourner, and awakening the conscience of the wicked? There is (so far as we have followed the literature of Spiritualism) no warrant for such a picture of beneficient activity. Good spirits, as well as bad—the souls of Plato and Fénélon, as well as those of the silliest and wickedest "twaddler" (as Dr. Wallace honestly describes many spirits *habitués* of *séances*)—have seemingly spent all the centuries since their demise humbly waiting to be called up by some, woman, or child precisely, as if they were lackeys ready to answer the downstairs' bell. In many cases we are led to infer that the dead have been striving for years and ages to make themselves known, and now for the last quarter of a century have very clumsily and imperfectly succeeded in doing so. Let us conceive for a moment a grand and loving soul—a Shakespeare, or Jeremy Taylor, or Shelley, who once spoke to mankind in free and noble speech, a man among men, fumbling about the legs of tables, scratching like a dog at a door, and eagerly flying to obtain the services of an interpreter like Miss Fox, Mr. Hume, or Mrs. Guppy,—and we have surely invented a punishment and humiliation exceeding those of any purgatory hitherto invented. If Virtue itself has nothing better to hope for hereafter than such a destiny, we may well wish that the grave should prove indeed, after all, the last home of "earth's mighty nation."

> Where Oblivion's pall shall darkly fall
> On the dreamless sleep of annihilation.

In conclusion, Is it too much now to ask that we may be exonerated, once for all, from the charge of unreasonable prejudice, if we refuse to undertake the laborious inquiry into the marvels of Spiritualism which its advocates challenge,—an inquiry pursued by methods bordering upon the sacrilegious, and terminating, either in the exposure of a miserable delusion, or else in the stultification and abortion of man's immortal Hope?

Teih-tsze.

We hold in our hand a volume printed on thin yellow-brown paper, almost exactly the same size and thickness as a monthly number of the *Cornhill Magazine*. Though equal in bulk, its weight is hardly one-half that of the magazine; and so thin is the paper, that the foreign book, although printed only on one side of the sheet, contains about seventy pages more than the English one. The writing runs from top to bottom of the page, as is shown by the dividing lines between the columns. Neither the arrow-headed inscriptions of Ninevite marbles, nor the hieroglyphics of Egyptian papyri, present such an intricate puzzling appearance to the uninitiated eye as do these complicated characters; and yet they are more familiar to our English vision than any other oriental writing; indeed, we may venture to say, than any other foreign language whatever. For there can hardly be man, woman, or child in the British isles, certainly there can be none among the four millions of London, who have not frequently gazed at this strange character where it stares them in the face in every grocer's window upon the sides of tea chests. Owing to its extreme dissimilarity to all other forms of writing, possibly the majority of these gazers never imagine that what they see is intelligible written language, but take it to be grotesque ornamentation, congruous to the willow-pattern plate style of beauty. Yet these queer-looking pages, with their endlessly diversified combinations of crosses and squares, straight lines and flourishes, curves and dots, picture forth to the instructed eye the thoughts and feelings of a heart that ceased to beat thousands of years ago, and a brain long since decomposed to join the dust of a land ten thousand miles away, and that with no less precision than the columns of the morning's *Times*, still damp from the press, reflect the ideas which passed through the editor's mind last night. If thought be but a mode of matter in motion, our brain has been just now agitated by vibrations first set in movement about two thousand three hundred years ago within the skull of a black-haired, yellow-skinned Mongolian, who pondered the mysteries of existence while he cultivated his rice-field, somewhere not far from where the impetuous Hoang-ho turns its turbid rush from a southerly direction eastward. It is curious to review the strange and various media along which the vibrations must have passed from his brain to ours. In his age pen, ink, and paper were yet unknown. Either he himself, or more probably his disciples after him, painfully scratched with a knife's point rude figures on the smooth surface of slips of split bamboo, to record the memories of thoughts they would not willingly let die. As the

centuries rolled on, woven silk was substituted for the wood, and a brush of hair took the place of the graving-tool. Later still this costly material yielded to coarse paper made from the inner bark of trees, ends of hemp, or old fishing nets, and by and bye of the fibre of the very bamboo plant which had afforded the earliest writing-tablets. Centuries before Guthenberg, Faust, and Caxton, this book of tea-chest symbols was once more graven on wood, but now cut in relief on a block of pear-tree wood, from which copies were printed off with ink made of lamp-black and gum. Multiplied by the press, the book held a more secure tenure of existence, though in a country where book-worms and white ants rapidly devour neglected libraries, new editions must have been frequently issued to preserve the work for posterity. Originally the outcome of a human mind, thinking and teaching amid poverty and obscurity, its author could hardly have expected it to be remembered beyond the third or fourth generation, yet here it is, after more than two millenniums, a standard book among millions of reading men in Eastern Asia; and at present it is putting in motion the brain-cells of a red-haired stranger on the banks of the Thames, and perhaps, by means of these pages, may awaken some interesting and not altogether valueless trains of thought in the minds of English readers.

The catalogue of the imperial library of China, commenced by the erudite Lew Heang, and completed by his son Lew Hin about the commencement of the Christian era, enumerated and described upwards of eleven thousand sections* by more than six hundred authors. Three thousand of these contained the classics and their commentators. The remainder were classified under the heads of philosophy, poetry, the military art, mathematical science, and medicine. Of this respectable amount of literature by far the larger portion perished ages ago; the imperial library itself, with nearly its whole contents, being reduced to ashes during an insurrection in the generation succeeding the completion of the catalogue. But this library of the two Lew was only a collection of the scattered and charred fragments of a much larger antecedent literature; a restoration by means of new copies of half-legible tablets disinterred from their hiding-places in gardens, or dug out of old walls, in dilapidated houses. Midway between Leih-tsze's time and the labours of the Lew family, occurred the infamous attempt of that Chinese Vandal, Shih Hwang Te, the first Emperor of China, to annihilate all literature, with slight exceptions, that existed in his dominions, that is, throughout what was to him and his people the whole civilized world. Leih-tsze lived in the feudal age of China, when the area drained by the Yellow River, was divided into a hundred petty kingdoms, dukedoms, and baronies, nominally owning allegiance to one Suzerain, but practically independent. Two centuries after his death, a Chinese Alexander the Great issued from the extreme

* The meaning of *peen*, translated "section," is uncertain. Originally a slip of bamboo, it came to mean a chapter of a book, or a book. Probably it stands for section, or chapter, in the catalogue above referred to, as the authors hardly could have written eighteen or nineteen works apiece.

west of that Eastern *orbis terrarum*, and welded all these states into one great despotic empire. Inflated by an insane pride which could not brook comparison with the mythic glories of the semi-fabulous hero-kings of antiquity, and irritated by the conservatism of the literati, who were to him what the French Legitimists were to Napoleon the First, he resolved to commit to the flames every memorial of the past, in order that the history of humanity might begin with his reign. The attempt failed. Literature was too widely spread, and the love of literature too deeply ingrained in the hearts of the people, for the efforts of a tyrant to exterminate it, even though the monster went to the length of burying alive four hundred and sixty learned men who resisted his decrees. But only those books which possessed the largest amount of inherent vitality could sustain so severe an assault. Among these was this work of Leih-tsze. This suggests to us a remark of some importance. Shih Hwang Te's very objectionable form of bibliomania was happily as exceptional in Chinese history as Khalif Omar's consignment of the library of the Ptolemies to heat the bath fires of Alexandria was in Western history. But apart from any special and extraordinary attacks upon literature, every generation saw multitudes of books perish in China, either through neglect, or in the catastrophes of fire, war, or civil commotion. That this particular book should have survived from the fourth century B.C. to the age of printing, of itself marks it out as worthy of attention. The preface of the earliest extant commentator, Chang Sham, who edited Leih-tsze in the fourth century A.D., gives an interesting glimpse at the process of natural selection which was always going on, preserving a few favoured volumes from the oblivion into which numbers of other works continually lapsed. Chang Sham tells us, "I have heard my father say that his father married a Miss Wong, one of three sisters. Mr. Wong belonged to an old literary family which had a passion for book-collecting, and had become possessed of a vast library. The other Misses Wong also married scholars, and the three young men vied with each other in transcribing rare books. When there ensued a time of confusion in the reign of the Emperor Wai (A.D. 310), he and one of his brothers-in-law fled southward, each one putting as many books as he could into his baggage-waggons. The road, however, was long, and frequent attacks of robbers diminished their load greatly; so he said to the other, 'We cannot save all the books, let us select the rarer ones to preserve them from extinction.' Among those which he himself chose for preservation were the writings of Leih-tsze."

The continued existence of an author through two thousand years o literary vicissitudes, the earlier millennium of which was especially fatal to literature, may not, perhaps, prove its superior fitness to survive, according to our estimate of fitness. But it indicates that the book was congenial to the tastes, and interested the minds, of its preservers. We have met with the complaint on the part of English readers of Chinese translations, that "they contain nothing new." It would be strange, indeed, if Chinese poetry, philosophy, or religion, should contain any ideas abso-

lately new to those who have inherited the wealth of Sanscrit and Semitic, of Greek and Roman literatures, with all their offspring of later date. The value of a work like this is not in the novelty of its contents, but in the light it throws upon the development of the human mind among a people entirely uninfluenced by our Western progress. We should find great light would be thrown upon many interesting but difficult questions in psychology if we could discriminate always between original and imitative thought. Much which seems to us the purely spontaneous operation of our minds is, no doubt, unconscious reproduction of what has been first put into them from outside. If, however, we could enter into communication with the inhabitants, supposing there to be such, of Venus, Jupiter, and other planets, and upon comparison of the respective conditions and developments of mind in each we should find that the same dominant ideas and principles had manifested and established themselves in other planets as in our own, our conviction that these ideas and principles are not the artificial product of restless, baseless speculation, but the natural and necessary effect of the interaction between mind and the universe in which it works, would be greatly strengthened. The mutual comparison which is impossible for us with those star-dwelling neighbours of ours, we can obtain upon the surface of our own globe, whenever impassable mountain-ranges, and vast breadths of stormy ocean, have isolated any portion of mankind for a time sufficiently long to permit the independent evolution of thought, and its being recorded in literature. Whenever the time comes that science marks out our globe into distinct areas of independent mental evolution, China will occupy a prominent place, making one great division by itself, and affording in its ancient, vast, unbroken stream of literature the richest materials for comparison with the rest of the world. In this article we aim at nothing more than to give the reader a glimpse into the thoughts of an ancient thinker, some might say, dreamer rather, belonging to a long obsolete school of Chinese philosophy.

Conclusive proof of the mental isolation, and, therefore, independence of those old Chinese thinkers is derived from the extant literature itself. This does not militate against the theory that the black-haired race, which has almost obliterated the traces of earlier peoples in Eastern Asia, originally immigrated into the country, probably in successive waves separated by hundreds of years, from some part of Western Asia, taking its long pilgrimage across the sterile plateau of Thibet, and following the course of the Yellow River, until it founded its first permanent settlements on its banks about seven hundred miles from the sea. These immigrants may have brought with them the rudiments of writing, as they doubtless did bring many oral traditions, and habits of thought already formed, or in formation, before they bade a long farewell to the streams of humanity which tended south and west. Something, therefore, we must allow them as their original stock of mental furniture when they came into the land, at an unknown distant date, two, three, or more thousands of years

B.C. That which was strongest and most durable of this primitive floating stock of thought was crystallised in their most ancient books, called the Classics. We can see in these earliest national records that already, when they were first inscribed on the bamboo tablets, all memory of derivation from the West had died out of the minds of the people; and if a portion of their contents came into China from beyond the Western mountains, the earliest scribes had not the faintest sense of the fact. All Chinese literature after this, for about a thousand years, is beyond suspicion purely Chinese. Take our author for example; the whole known world to him extended only about three hundred miles east and west, and about half that distance north and south. All beyond this region was wrapt in Cimmerian darkness. On every hand a fringe of savage tribes surrounded the very limited area of civilisation, through which not the faintest rumour of what existed to the north and south had penetrated, while the ocean to the east was but dimly known by vague report, and the great mountain region to the west was the chosen abode of genii, deified men, and celestial spirits. Confucius, Laou-tsze, Leih-tsze, Yang-Choo, and all other leaders of thought in China for some centuries were either original thinkers, or were indebted to their own national literature only, not a trace of outside influence being discernible in their writings.

Leih-tsze is for us the name of a book rather than of a man. Unlike the great national hero Confucius, whose disciples Boswellized before Boswell, Leih-tsze's personality has left so faint an impression on his literary remains, that he has been taken by some Chinese critics for an imaginary personage. This incredulity we may comfortably waive aside on the high authority of the imperial catalogue of the reigning dynasty, which discusses the question temperately and fairly, and decides that there are no good grounds for doubting that there did live a man by name Leih Yu-kow, [or, as literature quotes him, Leih-tsze, the philosopher Leih, whose teachings were compiled into a book by his disciples, in the form in which we now have it, barring some errors and interpolations which have crept into the text. Beyond the bare fact of his existence in the kingdom of Ch'ing, nearly central among the feudal states, about four hundred years before the Christian era, we have only the most meagre information about him. Though a light of the age, a pupil of distinguished rabbis, and himself the revered master of a band of attached disciples, he was neglected by Government, and lived in obscurity and poverty. Once, indeed, he came into contact with the ruling powers, as the following anecdote shows:—" So poor was Leih-tsze, that he bore the traces of hunger in his emaciated frame. A travelling scholar drew the attention of the Prince of Ch'ing to this, saying, 'In your territory one of the leading teachers of the age lives in extreme poverty; is it because you, O prince, do not love learned men?' The prince immediately sent an officer to carry relief to Leih-tsze. Leih-tsze came out to receive the messenger, and with a double obeisance declined the gift. When he went inside again, his wife taunted him with the reproach, 'I was told

that a philosopher's wife and children were sure to be well off. Here we are all starving, and when the ruler sends us relief, you refuse it. This, no doubt, is an instance of the fate you are always preaching!' (Leih-tsze taught necessity and pooh-poohed free will. So his angry spouse seemed to have him on the hip.) But he quietly rejoined, 'The prince only sent his help in consequence of another man's report; he has no personal knowledge of me. Another day he will be listening to some one else's report, and finding me a criminal, that is why I declined the gift.'" These philosophers were a proud, at least self-respecting, set, counting it shame to be pensioners on royal bounty, unless royalty respectfully received their admonitions. The narrative intimates that, in this case, Leih-tsze's independence of spirit saved his life during a revolution which succeeded.

We have a peep at the man inside the philosopher's cloak in this next incident. "Leih-tsze started for Tsai, went half-way, and returned. A friend asked, 'Why have you come back?' 'I was afraid,' he replied. 'What made you afraid?' 'On the road I stopped to get a meal at the sign of "The Ten Syrups," and they presented me with a grand dinner.' 'What was there in this to frighten you?' 'Truly it made me very uncomfortable. I thought that if my personal appearance won me such reverence from a poor innkeeper, how much more would it make an impression upon a monarch of ten thousand chariots, who would surely employ me in Government, and ascribe merit to me. On this account I was afraid.' 'Excellent,' replied his mentor, 'I see you know how to conduct yourself. You will come to honour.'" The popularity from which the philosopher shrank, nevertheless, found him out and besieged him in the form of a numerous band of disciples, who showed their respect by taking off their shoes before entering his door. This, again, we are told, is an illustration of destiny. Leih-tsze was to be famous, and he became so, even against his will.

Though a few passing allusions give us all that we can glean of the personal individuality of Leih-tsze, this book, supplemented by other contemporary records, affords a very vivid picture of the state of society in which he moved. We are apt to think that times so far anterior to our own must still have retained lingering traces of primeval arcadian simplicity of thought and manners. But we are introduced by these pages to a highly artificial state of civilization, which felt itself removed by immense spaces of time from the youth of the world. Kings and nobles feasted in their halls, rode out in four-horse chariots to the chase or the battle; minstrels, jugglers, mechanicians crowded to their courts for employment and reward. Ladies sighed in the harems, or plotted with eunuchs to secure the advancement of their own children in place of the legitimate heir. Travelling statesmen and philosophers wandered from court to court with the latest recipe for establishing universal peace, and bringing mankind under one sway. Below them all was the great mass of the people engaged in trade, handicrafts, and the cultivation of the soil, but liable to be called upon for military service, and frequently

suffering the calamities of war. In this highly complex condition of society there were a few men who, instead of taking existence as they found it, laboured to discover its secret, or to amend its conditions. Some of these, by the fame of their learning or their wisdom, attracted disciples around them, and thus established informal schools, where the instruction was chiefly oral and by example, and in which keen debate upon the principles of philosophy and ethics was frequent. Among such self-constituted teachers Leih-tsze held a distinguished place, and to the admiration of his disciples we owe this record of his doctrines from which we will now present some specimens.

Mr. G. H. Lewes, after reviewing the history of philosophy from Thales to Kant and Hegel, considers that he has abundantly proved the barrenness of all metaphysics and the impossibility of ontology. These conclusions we do not venture to dispute. His numerous examples from Ancient Greece and Modern Europe might be paralleled by a third department in which the metaphysics of China should be exhibited, and India, of course, would add a crowded fourth. This agreement in prosecuting inquiries so inevitably barren seems to indicate an innate tendency in the human mind to ask these questions, unanswerable though they be. Granted that it is utterly impossible for man ever to extricate himself from the great stream of phenomena of which he is himself part, and to survey from the lofty altitude of absolute perception the realities of being, which here he knows only in its relations, will he ever learn to be contented in his necessary ignorance? A few thousands of generations more may perhaps evolve a human race which shall be incapable of curiosity about these profoundest speculations; and the man of the future, having thoroughly acquiesced in the hereditary conviction that truth is but the order of ideas corresponding to the order of phenomena, may have ceased even to scorn metaphysics as equivalent to inquiring about lunar politics, because the very memory that once such contemplations possessed irresistible fascination for the human mind shall have been long lost. If so, the future will be very unlike the past and the present, and for ourselves we acknowledge that the vista of human progress thus opening out before us does not seem attractive. Leih-tsze, however, lived in a metaphysical age, and in the very foreground of his philosophy we find abstruse speculations upon the nature of being in itself. A bare translation into English without explanatory notes would hardly be intelligible, but we may select a few sentences to show the style. "That which brings forth all things is not born; that which changes things is itself changeless. Spontaneously it lives, changes, takes form and colour, knows, is strong, decays and dies. Yet if you say that it lives and changes, has shape and hue, possesses knowledge and strength, is subject to decay and death, you err." Again: "There are living things and a cause of life; there is form, and a cause of form; there is sound and a cause of sound; there is colour and a cause of colour; there is flavour and a cause of flavour. That which life produces

is death, but the cause of life never comes to an end. That which form produces is substance, but the cause of form is immaterial. That which sound produces is hearing, but the cause of sound is ever inaudible. That which colour produces is beauty, but the cause of colour is ever invisible. All these are functions of the Absolute.* It can be male and female, yielding and rigid, short and long, square and round, living and dead, hot and cold, sweet and bitter, stinking and fragrant. It is without knowledge and without power, and it is omniscient and omnipotent." All this seems the childish babbling of a philosophy which has not grown up to manhood, and entered into possession of a polysyllabic terminology for its ideas; yet its meaning is equivalent to Herbert Spencer's fundamental proposition "the origin of all things is inscrutable." It recognises the existence of that "something" which is above, and behind, and in, all phenomena; which no acuteness of observation can reach, no profundity of meditation can fathom, but which we know is there. In this direction the latest researches of modern science and the crude reflections of our Chinese philosopher both come to a dead stop at exactly the same point.

How crude and fanciful the metaphysical speculations of Leih-tsze were is apparent in the following imaginary dialogue:—"King T'ang asked Hea-Kih, 'Was there originally a time when nothing material existed?' Hea-Kih replied, 'If originally there was nothing, whence have existing things come from? Will it be reasonable if some day posterity should ask whether anything existed at this time?' The King continued, 'Then is there really no succession of events?' Hea-Kih said, 'The succession of things is infinite. Beginnings may be endings, and endings may be beginnings. Who can discriminate them? But as to that which exists beyond all phenomena, and before all events, I am ignorant.' 'Then is the universe without limit?' asked the monarch. 'I know not,' Hea-Kih replied; but when pressed for an answer, added: 'The non-existent is infinite. Existence is finite. How do I know this? It is involved in the idea of the infinite. The infinite cannot have a greater infinite to bound it. But as to what limits the finite, I confess my ignorance.' T'ang asked, 'What is the nature of being beyond the limits of our world?' 'Just like it is in the middle kingdom,' was the answer. 'How know you that?' 'Because,' he replied, 'I have travelled east and west to the limits of civilisation, and everywhere I found things the same. At the extreme points of my wanderings I inquired of the people, and they assured me that they knew of nothing different beyond them. Thus I conclude that the whole universe is alike.'"

If disposed to smile at the superficiality of these reasonings, yet one must remember that whether we sound a bottomless ocean with a deep-sea line or a pole, the result is the same; in each case we fail to reach

* We must make apology to the sinologue for the audacity of this translation of *woo wei* by the Absolute. Yet does it not approach nearer to the idea of the Chinese than any other English expression?

the bottom. Our Chinese used the longest line he had, and could do no more, nor can we.

Leih-tsze's philosophy of life was fatalism, yet fatalism of a peculiar shade. He belonged to the school originated by the famous contemporary of Confucius, Laou-tsze, the watchword of which was *taou*, "the path." Confucius, too, believed in "the path," but his path was the path of duty, the way of righteousness, following the higher instincts of our moral nature.

"What Heaven has conferred is called *the nature*; an accordance with this nature is called *the path*; the regulation of this path is called *instruction*." It is much more difficult to grasp Laou-tsze's and Leih-tsze's meaning when they speak of "the path"; but this difference between the rival schools is clear. Confucius fixed his mind exclusively on the ethical side of human nature, while his opponents included in their idea of "the path" not only the totality of human nature, but the totality of the universe. One student of Taouism explains *taou* as the "ultimate ideal unity of the universe." [It is simpler to take "the path" for what we express by "the course of nature," only extending nature beyond physical things to embrace gods and men, mind and matter, heaven and earth, and all their contents in one universal stream of being, all pervaded by one uniting principle it is true, but that principle inscrutable to us, and inseparable from the stream of existence itself. This infinite march of events moves on of itself in its own irresistible current; it is folly to struggle against it, wisdom to resign ourselves to be borne along by the stream whithersoever it tends. "The Emperor Shun asked Ching: 'Can I attain to the possession of "the path"?'" (*Taou* here stands for the inner secret of being, the reality behind appearances, and perhaps might be rendered by "the truth.") "Ching replies to him: 'Your body is not your own, how can you acquire and possess *taou*?' Shun said, 'If my body is not my own, whose is it?' 'It is a form entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth,' was the answer. 'Life is not yours. It is a harmony entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth. Your nature is not yours, it is a concord entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth. Your children and grandchildren are not yours. They are new forms entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth. When you move, you do not know whither you are going; when you are at rest, you know not what you are grasping. The very food you eat is made by Heaven and Earth to nourish you, you know not how. Why should you talk of attaining to the possession of anything?'"

In the sixth chapter we have an amusing discussion between fate and free-will personified. What we call free-will is represented by Mr. Effort, who challenged Mr. Fate thus: "How can you compare your merits with mine?" Fate retorted: "What are these merits of yours which you wish to compare with me?" Effort replied: "Long life and early death, failure and success, honour and obscurity, riches and poverty, all depend upon me." Fate said: "Pang-tso was not wiser than the sages Yau and Shun, yet he lived to be eight hundred years old. Ngan Uen's

talents were not mediocre, yet he died at thirty-two. Confucius' virtue was not inferior to that of the princes of his day, yet he wandered about in poverty. The tyrant Chow's morality was not better than that of the three sages, yet he enjoyed the royal seat. If these things are your work, Mr. Effort, why do you confer long life, riches, and honours upon the bad, and accumulate misfortune on the good?" Effort replied: "According to what you say, I have no merits at all. But that things happen so contrary is your arrangement, not mine." Fate answered: "Since you say Fate does these things, why talk about their being *arranged* so? Crooked and straight are all the same to me. All things are what they are of themselves. How can I know anything about it?"

The sentimentalism of Xerxes weeping at his grand review would have met with small sympathy from a Taouist, as the following anecdote, told by Leih-tsze, shows:—"The King of Tsai, returning from a journey, came in sight of his capital from the northern hills and burst into tears, saying, 'Beautiful, beautiful, is my royal city! So stately and spacious, yet I must leave it and die! If I were to live for ever, I should never wish to quit this place and go elsewhere.' His courtiers wept with him, saying, 'Our food and clothing, our chariots and horses, are poor compared with yours. Yet we, too, are unwilling to die, how much more reason have you to dislike the prospect!' One among them, however, only smiled. The king, observing this, ceased to weep, and demanded of him why he alone smiled when all the others sympathised with their master's grief? The philosopher replied: 'If virtuous rulers never left their thrones, T'ae Kung and Hwan Kung would be always reigning. If valiant men never died, Chong Kung and Ling Kung would constantly occupy the royal seat. If these monarchs had not vacated the throne, you, my prince, would to-day be clad in mats and tilling the ground. You owe your occupancy of the throne to the mutations of life and death.'" This same doctrine of fatalism rudely jostles against an Englishman's conceptions of providence in our next illustration. Listen to this:—"Mr. Tien made a great feast in his hall, and sat down among a thousand guests to the banquet. While the waiters were bringing in fish and wild geese, Mr. Tien heaved a sigh and said, 'How generous is Heaven to man! For our use the corn grows; for us the waters yield fish, and birds fly in the air.' The guests re-echoed these sentiments; until a boy of twelve years old stepped forth and said, 'Not so, my lord. All things in heaven and earth live by the same right as ourselves. The large prey upon the small; the strong and intelligent eat the stupid and weak. It is not that they are made for each other. Man takes what is eatable and eats it. Why should you think that Heaven produced things for man's sake? Mosquitoes bite man's skin, and tigers devour his flesh. Did Heaven produce men for the mosquitoes and tigers?'"

Fate rules all; or, since there can be no such conscious intelligence in fate as the word "rules" suggests, all things are by fate. But this conviction does not interfere with human activity. A considerable part of

Leih-tsze's teaching is devoted to illustrate the power of mind over matter. Laying hold of such facts as the immense superiority in feats of skill, driving four-in-hand, swimming, rowing, archery, and music, and handicrafts, which is attained by unremitting practice, concentrated attention, utter fearlessness, and freedom from self-consciousness, our author seems to push them to the extreme of believing that man may possibly attain, by a still higher degree of abstraction, to an omnipotent command over material forces. Many of his tales, which have the appearance of extravagant credulity, may perhaps be intended to convey an allegorical meaning. We read of men who could ride upon the wind, walk through fire, over water, and even through solid rocks as through empty space. These marvellous stories, perhaps, only clothe in fables the philosopher's conviction of the power of wisdom and virtue to render the soul independent of the shocks and changes of external circumstances. These mystical utterances, however, lack the clue needed for their interpretation, and we are never sure whether Leih-tsze is credulous himself, or playing upon human credulity, or veiling some subtle meaning under his marvellous narratives. A few of these tales occupy a border-land between fact and fiction. Here is one which embodies a notion common enough among ourselves, that there is a wonderful power in faith, apart altogether from the reality of what is believed. "Tsze Wa was a favourite with the Prince of Tsun. Those whom he patronised were ennobled; those whom he spoke against were degraded. Two guests of his on a journey passed the night at a farm-house. The old farmer, by name Yau Hoi, overheard them conversing about the power of life and death, riches and poverty, possessed by Tsze Wa. The farmer, who was grievously poor, drank in all their words, and on the morrow went into the city and found his way to Tsze Wa's door. Tsze Wa's disciples were all men of good birth, used to dress in silk and ride in carriages, to walk with a stately step, and look about them with a lofty air. When they saw Yau Hoi, a weak old man with a dirty face and untidy clothes, come into the school, they despised him, and amused themselves by making game of him and pushing him about. Yau Hoi exhibited no sign of anger. Presently Tsze Wa led them up to the top of a lofty tower, and cried out, 'I'll give a hundred pieces of silver to any one who will throw himself down.' All of them eagerly responded, and Yau Hoi thinking they were sincere, determined to be first, and threw himself over. He clave the air like a bird, and alighted upon the ground without a broken bone. Tsze Wa thought he had escaped by chance. So he again pointed to a deep pool in the river and said, 'Down there is a precious pearl: dive and you will get it.' Yau Hoi again complied; dived into the flood, and when he came up, he had really got a pearl. The spectators then began to suspect something extraordinary; and Tsze Wa ordered that food and clothing should be prepared to present to him. Suddenly a great fire was discovered in Tsze Wa's treasury. Tsze Wa exclaimed, 'If any one dare venture in, he shall have whatever treasure he rescues as his reward.' Yau Hoi entered calmly, and came out again

unsoiled and unhurt. Then every one thought he possessed a magic charm. They crowded round to do him reverence, apologising for their former rudeness, and begging for his secret. Yau Hoi said, 'I have no secret. I myself do not know how it was done; but I will try to recount it to you. Last night Tsze Wa's guests lodged at my house, and I overheard them praising Tsze Wa's power of life and death, riches and poverty, and I perfectly believed it. When I came here, I took all your words to be true, and only feared lest I should not perfectly trust them and act them out. I was unconscious of my bodily frame, and knew no fear. Now that I know you have deceived me, I tremble, and wonder at what I have gone through. I consider myself lucky that I was not burnt or drowned. Now I shake with fear, and I shall never dare to approach fire or water again.' From this time forward, if Tsze Wa's pupils met a beggar or a horse-dealer on the road, they did not dare to be rude to him, but stopped and bowed." This represents the power of faith as inherent in itself. There is another view of faith which regards its efficacy as not in itself, but in its appeal to a higher Power. Leih-tsze was no theist, and he was so careless of the national objects of worship that they are hardly alluded to in his pages. Yet he gives us a story which will convey to many minds a meaning far beyond his own. "A stupid countryman, ninety years of age, had his dwelling on the northern slope of a lofty mountain-range, two hundred miles long and ten thousand cubits high. One day he was struck with the thought that a road to the south was eminently desirable, so he called his family together and proposed to level the precipices, and make a road through to the southern waters. His wife remonstrated, hinting that the old man's strength would not suffice to demolish a hillock, let alone those great mountains. But the old man was not daunted, and leading on his son and grandson, the three of them began to pick and dig, and to carry away the stones and earth in baskets, and an old widow sent her child of seven years old to help them. Winter and summer they toiled away, and after a whole year seemed to be where they began. A shrewd old grey-beard mocked their slow progress; but the stupid countryman replied with a sigh, 'Your heart is not so intelligent as that of this widow's feeble child. Although I am old, and shall die, I have a son, and he has a son; these will have children and grandchildren. My posterity will go on multiplying without end, and the mountain will not grow bigger. What is to prevent our levelling it?' The old man had nothing to say, but the spirit which presides over snakes heard what was said, and fearing that the work would not stop, reported the matter to God. God was affected by their sincerity, and commanded two genii to remove the mountains, shifting one to the east, and another to the south, so as to open a pass to the river Han."

In that last reference to God, Leih-tsze does but for a moment borrow the language of the ancient creed which he usually lost sight of in his speculations. On the subject of immortality he seems to have speculated much, and at times to have indulged some faint hope of existence beyond

the range of present vision. "Once on a journey he sat down with a group of his disciples to take a meal by the road-side. One of the company saw a skull, bleached with age, half hidden by the grass; he pulled the long grass aside and pointed to it. Leih-tsze said to his disciple Pak-fung, 'Only he and I know, and are independent of life and death.'" But his utterances on this are indistinct, and rather point to an absorption into an infinite substance than continued conscious individuality. "The living, according to nature, must end. The pure spirit-essence is Heaven's part, the bodily framework is Earth's part. When the spirit-essence leaves the form, both return to their true state. From birth to death man has four great changes, childhood, youth, old age, and death. In childhood his physical nature is simple, and his will is not divided, which is the perfection of harmony. External things cannot injure him, and his virtue is complete. In manhood his passions change like the wind and overflow like a flood. His desires and anxieties arise in abundance. External things fight against him, therefore his virtue declines. In old age his desires and anxieties become feeble, and his body is near its rest. External things do not occupy the first place. Although it does not reach the completeness of childhood, it is superior to middle age. In death he attains to rest, and returns to its extreme limit." The Taouist philosophers are never tired of aiming a blow at Confucianism, and thus the great sage is made to figure sometimes in ridiculous situations. In the next extracts there is probably a covert attack on the melancholy which overshadowed the life of Confucius, and wrapt his end in gloom. "Confucius roaming about the Tai mountain, saw Wing K'ai Ki walking in the fields, dressed in a deer-hide, with a bit of rope for his girdle, striking his guitar and singing. He asked him, 'Sir, what makes you so joyful?' K'ai Ki replied, 'I have many reasons for joy. Of all things Heaven has made, human beings are most noble, and I have been made a human being; that is one reason for joy. Men are more honourable than women, and I was made a man; this is a second cause for joy. Some men are born and die before they are out of the nurse's arms, but I have gone along for ninety years; that is a third cause for joy. Scholars are always poor, and death is the end of man. Why should I regret being as others and coming to my end?' Confucius exclaimed, 'Capital! you know how to be magnanimous.'" Another of these refreshingly contented spirits meets us in the following:—"Lam Lü, when a hundred years old, was gleaning in his patrimonial fields, clad only in a sheep-skin, and he sang as he went along. Confucius saw him from a distance, and said to his disciples, 'That old man is worth speaking to, go and question him.' Tsze Kung requested leave to go. Encountering him on a hillock, he looked him in the face, sighed, and said, 'Sir, have you not yet any regrets that you go on singing as you glean?' Lam Lü neither stopped walking nor singing. Tsze Kung kept on asking, until he looked up, and replied, 'What should I regret?' Tsze Kung said, 'In youth you failed in diligence, in manhood you did not struggle with the times,

now you are old you have neither wife nor child; death's appointed day is near; what occasions for joy can you have that you should sing as you glean?' Lam Lü smiled and said, 'All men share in my causes for joy; but they, on the contrary, take them for sorrows; because when I was young I did not work hard, and in my manhood I did not struggle with the times, therefore I have attained to this green old age. Now I am old, because I have neither wife nor child, and death's appointed day is near, therefore I rejoice like this.' Tsze Kung replied, 'It is natural to man to love long life and to dislike death; how is it that you take death to be a cause for joy?' Lam Lü said, 'Death and life are but a going forth and a returning, therefore when I die here, how do I know that I shall not live there? And how do I know that planning and craving for life is not a mistake? Also, how know I that for me to die now is not better than all my previous life?' Tsze Kung heard, but did not understand what he meant; so he went back and told the Master. The Master said, 'I knew he was worth speaking to, and so it has proved. But though he has got hold of the thing, he has not got to the bottom of it.'"

Live without care, die without fear; such was our author's philosophy of life. When we compare his ethical teaching with that of his great predecessor Laou-tsze, five or six generations before, we are struck with the marked degeneracy of his moral tone. In his *Taou Teh King*, the founder of the Taouist sect, despite his sphinx-like style, impresses us with a sense of his profound moral earnestness. Though Laou-tsze dissented altogether from the Confucian system, nevertheless we see in him an eager yearning for perfection, a pensive sadness in the contemplation of human follies and crimes, a positive inculcation of personal virtue, which draw out our hearts towards "the old philosopher." Confucius was the stern practical reformer like Calvin, whom we rather admire than love; while Laou-tsze possesses the attractive power of the mystic Tauler. It would be utterly unjust to attribute to the founder of Taouism the moral aberrations of his successors, even though we can detect in his teachings the germ of the subsequent evil development. For if we can detect it, he could not, and we cannot doubt that his devotion to virtue was as sincere as his conception of it was beautiful. If called upon to express the guiding principle of his moral teachings by one word, we shall not be exalting it above its intrinsic merits by choosing that noblest of words, self-abnegation. Not that he in the dim light of heathenism could see all that that word now implies to us in the clear light of our Christianity. The passive side of self-abnegation was more evident to him than the active. But amid the confused noises of a distracted world, the shock of battles, the intrigues of courts, the restless contentions for honour and advancement of the officials and scholars, the fierce pursuit of wealth by the merchants and artizans, Laou-tsze distinctly heard a still small voice, summoning him, and through him mankind, to the calm serenity of a life freed from selfish desires, devoid of covetousness, envy, and ambi-

tion, strong in acknowledged weakness, and victorious over pride and violence by the might of meekness and humility. To him the type of perfect goodness was water; "water which is good to benefit all things, while it does not strive, but runs to the place which all men disdain." The defects of his conception are manifest to us, though while yet untested by experience he may well have failed to perceive them. He disliked political reformers, because in them self-exaltation mingled with their desire to reform the world. He disliked preachers of morality, because their labours were an indication of, in a sense, the result of, the loss of morality. He disliked an artificial state of society, because it abounded in temptations to pride, covetousness, and deceit. This antagonism to effort, led him into the extreme of depreciating even effort for self-improvement. He appeared to entertain a vague hope that if men would only let themselves alone, strive for nothing, not even for goodness, the great *Taou*, that ineffable, inexplicable something, too mysterious to have even a name, would itself flow through the channels of the human heart, and bear the life along in the right direction. With all this exaggeration of his favourite precept "do nothing," his own personal attachment to virtue was sincere and supreme; and doubtless, while he continued to influence his own philosophy, this loyalty to virtue endured among his followers.

Leih-tsze lived near two centuries later, and in his teachings the earnest moral purpose of Taouism has given place to a licentious indifferentism. Here and there, indeed, we come across some lingering echoes of the traditional admiration for meekness and humility, but for the most part the philosopher is so lost in contemplation of the mystery of existence that he has not a spare thought left for these particular phenomena, virtue and vice. He is much more interested in the question whether man may not, by the power of abstract contemplation, penetrate into the secret of existence, and gain a superhuman control over natural forces. He still holds theoretically that the riches, power, and fame of the world are all delusive appearances, and that to be free from appetites, and passions, and self-assertion, is "the path;" but he has ceased to entertain the slightest hope that out of this doctrine will ever come a moral renovation of the world. Indeed, he suspects now that the distinctions of virtue and vice are themselves but delusive imaginations, as much as the pomps and vanities of life which his leader eschewed. One can hardly read the following specimens of his teaching without a shudder of disgust:—

"Tsze Ch'an * became Prime Minister of Ch'ing, and had sole authority in the Government. Within three years he brought the whole kingdom into a state of order. The good gladly submitted to his sway, and the bad obeyed his laws from fear. But his own brothers, Ch'iu and Muk, were addicted to vicious pleasures; Ch'iu loved wine, and Muk loved women. A thousand jars of wine stood in Ch'iu's cellar, and heaps of grain in his barns. When one passed his door at the distance of a hundred paces, the smell of distillation filled the nostrils. In his drink-

* A disciple of Confucius, and one of his personal attendants.

ing bouts Ch'iu forgot politics and morals, riches and poverty, friends and relatives, care of life and fear of death. Although the house were on fire, or swords clashing in his very face, he would know nothing about it. In Muk's harem were scores of concubines, selected for their youth and beauty; and at times he would shut himself in the inner apartments for three months together, not at home to his nearest relative or dearest friend. His emissaries haunted the whole country-side in search for lovely maidens, whom gold might tempt to enter his harem. Tsze Ch'an grieved over his brothers' ill-conduct night and day, and at last secretly consulted Tang Sik about it. 'I have heard,' said he, 'that a man must first of all regulate himself, next his family, and then the kingdom, proceeding from the near to the distant. Now I have brought the kingdom under government, but my own family is disorderly; this is contrary to "the path." Tell me, I pray you, how I may save my brothers.' Tang Sik replied, 'I have been wondering at it for a long time, but was afraid to speak about it. Why, sir, do you not find some opportunity of instructing them in the importance of following one's (moral) nature, and according with (Heaven's) decree, and also of alluring them by setting before them the high esteem which attends upon the practice of propriety and righteousness?'

"Tsze Ch'an took Tang Sik's advice, and went to visit his brothers; and began his instructions by saying, 'Man's superiority to the brutes consists in intelligence and forethought. Intelligence and forethought produce the rules of propriety and righteousness. Propriety and righteousness lead to fame and office. If you act upon the incentives of your passions, and abandon yourselves to wine and lust, you imperil your own lives. Listen to a brother's words, and if you repent in the morning, before night you shall receive a government appointment.' Ch'iu and Muk replied, 'Long ago we attained to knowledge, and made our choice; do you suppose we waited for you to come and teach us before we could understand? Life is not easy to get, but death comes of itself. Who would think of wasting a life so hard to get, by spending it in watching for a death which comes so easily? And as to caring for proprieties and righteousness, in order that we may brag over others, and doing violence to our own natures, in order to win an empty name, in our view this would be worse than death itself. All we wish is to exhaust the joys of life, and seize the pleasure of the present moment. Our only grief is that our physical capacity for pleasure is so small, we have no leisure to sorrow over loss of reputation or danger to life. If you are so puffed up by your political success, as to think of leading our minds astray by the seductions of glory and official salary, we think it mean of you and pitiable. Now we will tell you the difference. External government, however clever, is not certain of success, and inflicts suffering upon people. Internal government never leads to disorder, and men joyfully conform to nature. Your external government barely gets a temporary success in one small kingdom, and after all does not accord with the hearts of the people. Our

internal government may be applied to the whole world, and then kings and statesmen will have no more to do. We have long been wishing to teach you our doctrine, and do you on the contrary bring your doctrine to teach us!' Tsze Ch'an was dumfoundered, and departed without a word. Next day he reported the interview to Tang Sik. Tang Sik said, 'You, sir, have been living with perfect sages, and you did not know it. Who will say that you are wise? The good order of the kingdom is an accidental circumstance, not to be imputed as merit to you.'"

This licentious creed was the deliberate choice of Taouism; though of course Taouists used to the full our grand human liberty of inconsistency, and by no means carried out their principle either to its full logical or practical consequences. Still it remains a fact, that for a space, if only a brief space, philosophy in China rejected morality, and exalted licentiousness to the dignity of a religion. As a natural result Taouism rapidly degenerated, and at the same time lost its hold upon the people. If in their lifetime Laou-tsze held his banner of spontaneity bravely aloft, and Confucius waged a desperate but hardly equal strife under the standard of rigid self-discipline, the two teachers were in their hearts fighting on the same side, to reclaim a lost world to truth and virtue. But while the Confucianists remained staunch to this double object of pursuit, truth and virtue, the Taouists thought they perceived an inconsistency between them, and chose truth rather than virtue. The complete victory of Confucianism along the whole line is a fact worthy of our consideration. Confucius was the prophet of conscience, not only grasping tenaciously the truth of the moral supremacy of conscience, but believing most devoutly in its divine origin, and his own divine mission to defend its rights, and also that there could not be salvation for humanity except in obedience to its behests. In his lifetime he fought an Ishmaelitish conflict, a guerilla warfare for his sacred faith. Every man's hand seemed against him, and it was as much as he could do to live with his principles, though the life of a wanderer from one city to another, from one kingdom to another people. After his death his disciples fought for his truth like soldiers combating desperately over the corpse of their dead leader, and still for generations the battle seemed to hang in the balance. But at last the victory was achieved, and it was final and glorious. Conscience proved its own supremacy, by putting these doctrines of natural licence to disgraceful rout. Now, and for these thousand years and more, that bewildering attempt of Leih-tsze's to confuse the distinctions between right and wrong has seemed as strange and unnatural to the Chinese mind as it seems to our own. The sect continued, but as a small minority of the nation, a minority given over to idolatry, superstitious arts, magic, alchemy, the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life. But the name of Taou has never lost its potency in China, and for centuries it has been united with Confucianism and Buddhism as a member of the trinity of philosophies. At the parting of the ways, where the doctrine of nature and spontaneous life diverged from the doctrine of virtue and stern self-

discipline, the nation bade farewell to the dreamy mysticism of Laou-tsze, to follow the banner of Confucius and conscience. Yet a memory of the sweetness and serenity of those earlier musings lingered long in the national mind, preserving the ancient doctors of Taou from oblivion and their writings from contempt. They appealed to our nature on one side, and they had glimpses of one side of truth also, and although we rejoice in the clear victory of the teacher of righteousness and benevolence, as a notable instance of the survival of the fittest in the mutual struggle for life of the philosophies, we acknowledge that the far-off echoes of ancient Taou sound a note, an under-tone of which can be detected in many quarters, even in our modern Christian England.

There is a vein of humour in Leih-tsze which enlivens with a genial light some of his shrewd observations of human nature; and though he fails to smite at vice with the trenchant blade of moral faith, he manifests a visionary longing for a happier state in which vice is not. With a few extracts illustrative of these traits, we will close this notice of him.

"In the state of Ki there was a man who was anxious lest heaven and earth should fall to pieces and he have no place to lodge his body in. He could neither eat nor sleep from anxiety. And there was another who was anxious about his distress and went to enlighten him. 'The heaven gathers air,' he said, 'and there is no place which is not full of air: sun, moon, and stars are only collected air which contains light; even if they could fall they would do no harm.' His pupil said, 'Suppose the earth should break, what then?' 'The Earth,' replied his mentor, 'is an accumulation of clods, packed close together on all sides. You may go about the whole day treading and trampling on the earth without any fear of its breaking.' His hearer rejoiced like a released prisoner, and the teacher rejoiced in sympathy with him. But Chang Lo heard it and said with a smile: 'Rainbows and clouds, wind and rain, sky and mountains, seas and rivers, metals and stones, fire and wood, are all but forms of matter in combination. Who says they will not be destroyed? A little thing like man in the midst of the vast universe may think it indestructible, and to trouble ourselves about such a remote contingency is needless. But heaven and earth will inevitably be destroyed, and if you encountered that time, how could you help being anxious?' Leih-tsze heard and smiled, saying: 'It is equally erroneous to say that the universe will be destroyed, and to say that it will not be destroyed. We are unable to determine it either way. Life does not know death, and death does not know life. Why should I trouble my mind about the permanency of the universe?'"

"Yang Choo was travelling through Sung, and came to an inn. The inn-keeper had two wives, one of whom was pretty and the other was ugly. He esteemed the ugly one and slighted the pretty one. Yang Choo asked the reason. The inn-keeper replied: 'That pretty one thinks herself pretty, but I do not perceive her beauty. The ugly one thinks herself ugly, but I do not perceive her lack of comeliness.' Yang Choo said to

his disciples: 'Remember this; if you act virtuously without attributing the merit of it to yourself, where will you go without being loved?'"

"When the great Yu was regulating the waters, one day he lost his way, and wandered into a country on the northern shore of the North Sea, he knew not how many times ten thousand miles from China. In that land was neither wind nor rain, frost nor dew, nor did he meet with any kinds of animal or vegetable life. On all sides the ground was perfectly smooth, only gently rising in elevation in the centre. A vase-shaped mountain rose in the middle of that country, with a circular orifice on the summit, from which a fountain issued, called the spiritual fountain. Its fragrance was sweeter than rose-gardens or cinnamon groves, and its taste was more exquisite than that of the finest wine. From one source it divided into four channels and flowed down the mountain, meandering through the whole land and watering every corner of it. The climate was serene, perfectly free from malaria. The people who lived there were of a gentle disposition and in harmony with their external circumstances. No strife nor violence marred their peace. Their hearts were tender and their frames were soft. They were innocent of pride and envy. Old and young dwelt together, and they had neither prince nor official among them. Men and women wandered about in company, and they employed no match-makers, sent no marriage presents. They dwelt on the banks of the stream, and needed not to plough and sow. The climate was so genial that they did not weave nor wear clothes. They lived to be a hundred years old; premature death and disease being unknown among them. The population was always increasing, till it was innumerable; and enjoyed perpetual felicity, ignorant of decay, old age, grief and hardship. Delighting in music, the voices joining harmoniously in song, ceased not throughout the day. If hungry or weary they drank of the spiritual fountain and their strength and spirits were restored to their normal condition. Too deep a draught intoxicated, and then they slept for a week without waking. When they bathed in the spiritual fountain their skin became glossy and the fragrance exhaled for a week. When King Muh of Chau entered that kingdom he tarried there for three years without a thought of home. On his return to his royal palace he was plunged in profound melancholy, refused food and wine, and all the delights of his harem, and several months passed before he recovered."

"A man in the East, while on a journey, was reduced by starvation, and lay dying by the road-side. A celebrated highwayman passed that way, and, pitying him, dismounted, and put a bottle to his lips. After three sucks the dying man revived, and opened his eyes. Seeing his deliverer bending over him, he inquired his name, and being told, exclaimed, 'Are not you the famous robber? What induced you to give me drink? I am an honest man, and cannot receive food from you.' Thereupon he beat the ground with his arms and tried to vomit, gasped and gurgled in his throat, fell back, and expired. But if the man was a robber, his drink had not committed theft. How strangely men confuse

things." This is a satire upon certain well-known anecdotes of Confucian worthies, whose unbending scrupulousness appeared ridiculous to our Taouist believer in non-resistance to the universal life-stream of nature.

"A neighbour of Yang Choo lost a sheep, and calling upon the villagers to go in search of it, he asked the assistance of Yang Choo's servant also. Yang Choo inquired why so many persons were needed to seek for a single sheep. His neighbour said, 'Because the roads and by-paths are many.' When they returned, he asked if the sheep had been found. 'No, it is lost,' they answered. 'How lost?' he demanded. 'The bypaths branch out into other bypaths, and we could not possibly tell which way it had gone, so we returned.' A shade of sadness fell upon Yang Choo's countenance; for a long time he did not speak, and he did not smile again that day. His disciples marvelled, and requested an explanation. 'The sheep was not a valuable animal, and it did not belong to you; why should it cloud over your happiness like this?' Yang Choo returned no answer. Discussing it among themselves, one of them said, 'The great path divides into many by-paths, and many sheep are lost therein. How is it that you sit in the master's school, and have not yet learned to interpret the master's meaning?'"

"Yang Choo's younger brother went out for a walk in a suit of white silk, but rain coming on, he borrowed a black cloak to return in. When he reached the door, his dog came out and barked at him. The young man was provoked, and raised his hand to strike the dog. Yang Choo said, 'Do not beat him; you are no better yourself. Suppose your dog went out white, and came back black, would it not startle you?'"

"One new year's day, the people of Ham Tan presented a number of pigeons to their lord. He was very pleased, and liberally rewarded them. A guest of his inquired the reason. 'This is new year's day,' he said, 'and I shall set them all at liberty to fly back to the woods, and so express the good-will of my heart to all living things.' His guest replied, 'The people are aware of your intention to release the birds, and therefore they entrap and catch them, and many are killed in their attempts. If you wish to keep them alive, the better way would be to prohibit catching them.'"

"A man who had lost his axe, suspected his neighbour's son. He watched him, and said to himself, 'He is the thief; he has the gait of a thief, the face of a thief, the voice of a thief; everything in his appearance and behaviour says as plainly as possible that he has stolen the axe.' But happening one day to find the axe in his own garden, when he next met his neighbour's son, there was nothing whatever in his looks or behaviour which could lead one to suspect him to be a thief."

"Confucius, on a journey, saw two children disputing, and asked the reason. One of the lads said, 'I say that the rising sun is near us, and at noon it is far off.' The other said, 'No, the sun is far off at dawn, but

near at mid-day.' The first said, 'Why, when the sun rises it is as large as a chariot-wheel, but in the middle of the day it is no larger than a plate; is it not small when at a distance, and large when it is near?' The other said, 'When the sun first rises, its rays are mild and genial; but at noon it is blazing hot. Surely it is hotter when near, and cooler when afar.' Confucius could not decide the point. The two children smiled and said, 'Who will say that you know much?'"

The English reader may be disposed to think that in this respect there is not much to choose between Confucius and Leih-tsze and all the rest of China's boasted sages. They lived before the Baconian philosophy; and a clever boy from one of our primary schools could instruct them in the exact sciences. But unless, in the progress of human evolution, man develops into a being very different from what he always has been, the subject-matter of Taouistic speculation will continue to possess intensest interest and unrivalled practical importance for mankind. Our meditations upon the *whence* and the *whither* may fail to lead to those definite and clear conclusions which science craves, but they exert a momentous influence upon the formation of a practical rule of life. One does not need to go far in modern literature in order to detect an order of thought which is strictly parallel to that naturalistic philosophy of which *Leih-tsze* is a representative. Those old Chinese thinkers were but following a tendency in human nature, which exists in us still; and it can do us no harm to learn whither it led them, and what it ended in. Happily we have a sure confidence that, as nobler instincts and loftier aspirations prevailed in the far East, leaving this indolent epicurean philosophy to lose itself in the ignominious quagmire of absurd and degrading superstition, so the philosophy of conscience and duty, of effort and conflict, will prevail, and must prevail in the long run, however for a time men may seem to lose heart and long for the land of the lotos-eaters.

F. S. T.

Ballad.

Why is it so with me, false Love,
  Why is it so with me?
Mine enemies might thus have dealt;
  I fear'd it not of thee.

Thou wast the thought of all my thoughts,
  Nor other hope had I:
My life was laid upon thy love;
  Then how could'st let me die?

The flower is loyal to the bud,
  The greenwood to the spring,
The soldier to his banner bright,
  The noble to his king:

The bee is constant to the hive,
  The ringdove to the tree,
The martin to the cottage-eaves;
  Thou only not to me.

Yet if again, false Love, thy feet
  To tread the pathway burn
That once they trod so well and oft,
  Return, false Love, return;

And stand beside thy maiden's bier,
  And thou wilt surely see,
That I have been as true to love
  As thou wert false to me.

F. T. Palgrave.

The Real Prosper Mérimée.

Some time has gone by since M. Michel Lévy issued, under the auspices of M. Taine, a posthumous work which threw unusual light on the career and peculiar temperament of one of the most remarkable personalities of this century. In France, wearied by intestine and foreign warfare, the sickened mind of the intellectual public has, for three long years, given unmistakeable tokens of transient sterility; the living appear momentarily incapable of healthy productions. Authors themselves are full of the national cares, political fever swamps that moral repose which is needed for meditation, and readers are fain to be content with the literary treasures of the past, whence a recent influx of posthumous works, of more or less interest, in the shape of private correspondences. The Parisians have had before them letters of Lamartine, letters of Sainte Beuve, and of others, all of which afforded a valuable insight into the real character of their writers. None, however, deserved more study than those of the late Prosper Mérimée, and critics of both countries have paid a deserving homage to these confidences of a complex genius. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the *Quarterly Review* have in turns given exhaustive treatments of the subject. Nor should we venture on re-opening a field of speculation that has called forth such universal notice, but that, in our own opinion, there is further room for interesting remarks, mainly owing to the scope within which the reviewers of the *Lettres à une Inconnue* have seen fit to remain. Far from us be the presumptuous thought of analysing better what others have analysed so ably; our meaning is that the work has been considered rather in regard to its intrinsic merits as a literary production than used as it ought to be, namely, as a key to a curious psychological study. Some have deprecated the laxity of morals the writer betrays in more than one instance; others have taken *seriatim* divers remarks on men and things, apparently forgetting that many hidden thoughts that have crossed the minds of most men are consigned to intimate correspondence—thoughts the author would have been loth to affirm in public; and, to the best of our knowledge, none have allotted to Mérimée the place to which he has a right. Our purpose would be to repair this omission. The readers of Mérimée's critics may still ask in vain: "Who was he? A vulgar sceptic, or a typical incarnation of a time; a man of genius, or a distinguished *lettré?* What was his influence on his contemporaries, and how will posterity estimate him? And how is it that Mérimée attained celebrity of a peculiar kind which far surpasses that of geniuses superior

to his?" Perhaps the following observations may be useful towards a satisfactory answer.

It was not without reason that the author of the *Life of Jesus* recently described Prosper Mérimée as the Petronius of his epoch. He was not merely an eminent man of letters of the ordinary calibre, a novelist, a *savant*; he was something more, a type of the modern race of Frenchmen, a man whose adamantine nature was the receptacle of all doubts and disbeliefs. Together with these two illustrious sceptics, Sainte Beuve and Stendhal, he made up a trio which might well have passed for the treble incarnation of haughty and resigned despair. Sainte Beuve possessed a store of amiability which daubed his scepticism with a pleasant glaze of varnish. Stendhal was, like all those who have scrutinised the vices of human nature with a magnifying glass, of a dark and desponding mood, corrected by considerable tenderness of heart; but he, Prosper Mérimée, stood an image of perfection in character, a strong, invulnerable sceptic, whose acquired toughness was proof alike against love and hatred—a human Mephistopheles, not of the capacity of Goethe's, but rather like the evil spirit such as he has been personified by a famous singer—polished, refined, elegant; stabbing with daggers of the finest steel and richest work, darting a murderous epigram in the choicest language, working the same havoc as the bitter spirit of German creation, but killing, tearing, and wounding with the exquisite politeness of a perfect gentleman. Having so far guarded himself against the invasion of banality and shown the teeth to most men, he tried his hand at everything, attained perfection in most things, threw them up in disgust after becoming their master, and one day awoke one of the most forlorn of human creatures. And still Prosper Mérimée was not born what he was hereafter. Such sentiments as he possessed and prided on do not issue from the cradle. A man gifted with the choicest faculties, as Mérimée, must have the embryo of high qualities of heart; and if his judge will take the trouble to follow the incidents of the first years of his life, he will soon find singular instances in support of this. More than any other, a youthful creature owning to an unusual degree the faculty of observation should be attended to by his educators, for, if we judge by the present instance, the slightest lesson wrongly given and erroneously understood will turn a precocious child into a dire path of thought. M. Taine tells us, in his interesting preface, that when he was nine years old Mérimée was scolded by his parents for some trifling breach of manners, and dismissed from the drawing-room in an agony of shame. While still in tears at the door, he heard his friends laughing and saying: "Poor child! he thinks we are very angry." Even at that tender age he was revolted at the idea of being made a fool of and deceived, and henceforth he pledged himself to repress his sensibility, to be constantly on guard against enthusiasm and effusion, and to speak and write as if in the presence of a harsh and bitter hearer.

To this petty occurrence, which would have left but little impression

on other children, may, on Mérimée's own admission, be traced the origin of the programme he set to himself to fight his way through life. Hence he studied a part, and applied his rich gifts of intellect to a manufacture of an artificial self. He curbed his passions, tastes, and desires under a strong hand; he had a sensitive heart; he repressed his sensitiveness so that it did not seem to exist; later on the artificial process got the better of him, and it was really suppressed altogether. His disposition naturally tended to affection; this he concealed in the same way—not that he was yet irreclaimable, but, to quote Taine's happy metaphor, certain race-horses are so well bred by their masters that when they are in hand they dare not indulge in the slightest gambol. So that he entered the lists clad in an inward cuirass which the contact of society was to harden more and more, and bent on regarding the world much as one contemplates a forest full of murderous robbers. He looked about him, and bitterly disposed as he was he applied himself more to the observation of what is contemptible in human nature than to an appreciation of its nobler sides. His remarks justified preconceived ideas, and from the first, as he said himself, quoting Hamlet, man pleased him not, nor woman neither. Let us say, however, that his contempt for his fellow creatures came not from a personal and disparaging comparison with himself, for his letters to the unknown lady in whom he confided show that the shortcomings he despised in others he equally derided in himself. One of his subjects of ironical commentary was that throughout his life he was credited for qualities not his own, while he was blamed for defects which he had not. With such thoughts there was nothing surprising that he should adopt as a first fundamental maxim the paradox that speech is given to man to conceal his yearnings, and, as a second principle, Talleyrand's recommendation to guard oneself against generous movements because they are usually the best.

A natural consequence of this moral perversion was that he affected, in the process of writing, theories of a totally different cast from those of others. First of all he examined with a critical eye the manner then predominant among the finest writers France has produced in this age. The Romantique renovation was in full efflorescence; Mérimée set at work over dishes of the same taste. A story is told of an original who stopped to look at one of the hottest street fights of the Revolution of July 1830; a National guard was obstinately firing on the Royal Suisses without the slightest effect, and the stranger was looking on in apparent disgust. Presently he walked up to the unsuccessful marksman, took the rifle from his hands, and volunteered to show how the work should be done; he fired and one of the Suisses fell dead. As he attempted to return the rifle to its owner, and as the other urged him to keep the weapon he could use so well, the stranger gravely replied: "No, thank you; I am a royalist; it isn't my opinion." Likewise Prosper Mérimée joined the Romantiques; he wrote Spanish sword and cloak comedies, which he gave as translations from the text of an unknown genius, thereby mystifying the public and

proving that it was in his power to affect the tone and style of the new school as successfully as the best, although "it was not his opinion." He tried the trick once more with the same felicitous result in *La Guzla*. And then he gave up romanticism, and took to writing according to his own ideas, after contemptuously observing that such masterpieces as he had achieved only demanded the knowledge of a word or two of a foreign language, a sketch-book of a foreign country, and a tolerable style. Nothing could be more withering for himself and others.

Prosper Mérimée seems throughout his existence to have been filled with that restlessness which according to Mr. Forster affected Charles Dickens, although his studious care was to conceal any sign of such a disposition, and to appear a man of marble. He did certainly devote enormous study to French literature, and especially to contemporaneous productions, but marvellously keen at detecting the strings which set the machine in motion, ever intent on scanning the details, he ignored their real beauty of *ensemble*, lost sight of the pregnant sides of a work, and soon wearied of the best. It had been the same with Art; a painter of no little ability, he had become convinced of the sterility of the brush, because the purely mechanical side of art had no secret for him. It was the same reason which induced him to sift the delicacies of six languages, and ransack their literature: occasionally he brought forth a gem and set it in French, adding the perfection of his style to some pregnant novelette of Ivan Tourguenef's; but eventually he wearied of polyglotism too, and deeming nothing among the living worthy of notice, he turned his eyes to the past, and turned the final leaf of his literary existence, that of a man who could never apply his talent to the services of a definite idea, who had every natural element to be happy and illustrious, and who failed in being the one and but just attained the other. Mérimée henceforward wasted priceless faculties in artistic attempts which could only be entitled to the place of curiosities of literature. He doted on imparting life to things of the past; he liked to transfer himself, like Théophile Gautier, into the midst of dead civilisations, constructing an admirable story on the sight of an inscription, a ruin, using his acuteness of observation in the framing of types to people the archaic visions he indulged in. He even went so far as to observe his surroundings merely with the purpose of guessing by means of induction the gait and ideas of their predecessors. In this ungrateful labour he has shown well enough what he was capable of doing if he had applied himself to the serious analysis of contemporary characters. Without possessing the intensity of observation of a Balzac, his intellectual condition might have entitled him to a place but just below this great master. And it is strange and painful to follow him as he sedulously narrows his own scope in art.

All the reasons we have adduced above fatally drove him into the rankest egotism which was ever the bane of a writer. His historical works no one, not excluding himself probably, took a very great interest in; they are cold and stately—comparable for the matter, if the

metaphor be permitted to us, to water contained in the finest Bohemian glass. As to his essays in fiction it is vastly different. When he has deigned to remain in his own time, and to pick out his personages and action from modern society, his productions have always been admirable both in matter and form. His process was much like Stendhal's. As he wrote for the select (if indeed he ever wrote for the edification of any one) he disdained the imbroglio of commonplace sentiments, the banalities of ordinary conversation; he obviously aimed at concentration and abridgment, at probing the acts of man by certain telling features of human nature, and, in fact, at leaving much for the reader to guess by suppressing what vulgarities are wearisome to the "profound few." This kind of work offers equal dangers and advantages; it excludes two thirds of the general readers who may be wanting in the quick sagacity requisite for the proper comprehension of the author's process, although in the main they may be qualified to appreciate the essence of his work; further, it circumscribes the repute of a writer in a narrow circle, and, moreover, such style always tends to fall into obscurity and enigma. On the other hand, the omission of a great many strictly useless details preserves a work from the caprices of fashion and change of customs, and *Carmen* and *Colomba*, free as they are from descriptions of transient and superficial interest, and consisting solely of the condensed description of passions and impulses that are eternal, will be eternally useful, just as Shakspeare and Milton are. These masterpieces are but few in number, and they serve rather to show what their conceiver might have done than what he has done.

We have now done with Mérimée until we find the new and characteristic *Lettres à une Inconnue*. Their literary merits are of secondary consideration; suffice it to say, in departing from the subject once for all, that their form, wit, and ingeniosity are paramount. As to the *Inconnue*, there is no need to inquire after her. What is thoroughly engrossing is the perusal between the lines of the desolate story of unhappiness the great sceptic relates. There are expressions for every disgust, words eloquent in their brevity expressive of deceptions, weariness, *ennui*; bitter estimations of men, impeachments of what he calls human imbecility; contemptuous allusions to his best friends, and topping all a clear disbelief in goodness, and those noble commonplaces, honour, love, chivalry, abnegation. It is worthy of special note that Mérimée is withal open to superstition, several instances of this being manifested in different letters; so strong is the yearning of every one towards a faith, whatever it may be. We have found but one good note* in the two volumes of this

* The passage we allude to has been quoted by the *Quarterly Review* as very cynical. The opinion we hold being somewhat different, the passage should be given: "I went to a ball given by some young men of my acquaintance to which all the *figurantes* of the Opera were invited. These women are mostly stupid; but I have remarked how superior they are in moral delicacy to the men of their class. There is only a single vice which separates them from other women—poverty." The *Quarterly* goes on to remark that a man must be far gone in cynicism to hazard such a

correspondence; as to the harsh ones, they abound; on Frenchmen especially his satire never tarries: "The greatest nation in the world is made up of a set of scapegraces, inconsistent, anti-artistic, illogical, bigoted, and not even possessing the religion that comes from the heart." He was a senator of the Empire, not out of any particular liking for a dynasty or a principle, but because, as he said, "tyrants had over Republicans the advantage of washing their hands;" in his official capacity he was once called upon to make a speech in the Senate, and as it was his first public address he felt rather timorous. "I gained courage," he writes to the *Inconnue*, "when I bethought myself that I was speaking to two hundred fools." On another occasion he relates to the same person how, answering a toast to European Literature at a dinner of the Literary Association, presided over by Lord Palmerston, he gravely spoke nonsense in English for a quarter of an hour, which seemed to be highly appreciated by the so-called learned men who listened. Further on he writes: "You cannot imagine my disgust for our present society; it seems as if it tried, by its stupid combinations, to augment the mass of annoyances and troubles which are necessary to the order of the world." Speaking of Englishmen, he says that individually they are stupid, but as a whole admirable. Few things, in fact, find grace in his eyes. On marriage, he says that nothing is more repulsive: "The Turks, who bargain for a wife as for a fat sheep, are more honest than we Europeans who daub over this vile transaction with a varnish of hypocrisy but too transparent." It may be seen at this stage how the scepticism of the first days has begot a cynic. He might have sought happiness in union with a lovely and amiable woman (for he was a great favourite with the sex); but he discarded marriage and women by principle. Much of this insensibility is revealed in the following lines: "The other day I went out boating on the Seine. There was a quantity of small sailing-boats filled with all kinds of people about the river. Another large one was freighted by a number of women (of those of the bad tone). All these boats had gone to the shore, and from the largest emerged a man about forty years old, who had a drum, and who drummed away for his own amusement. While I was admiring this lubber's musical dispositions, a woman of about twenty-three comes up to him, calls him a monster, says that she followed him from Paris, and that it would fare ill with him unless he admitted her to his party. All this was going on ashore, our own boat being twenty yards away. The man with the drum was drumming away while the woman was remonstrating, and he at last told her with much coolness that he would have nothing of the kind. Upon this, she ran to the boat furthest from the shore and jumped into the water, thereby splashing us abominably. Although she

paradox, and that the "Unknown" must have been singularly destitute in feminine dignity and self-respect could she have endured to be told that she was only separated from such a class of women by poverty. We hope the "Unknown" did endure it and approve of it, for, unless the *Quarterly* has entirely misunderstood Mérimée's meaning, no worse construction could be put on a very sensible remark.

had extinguished my cigar, indignation did not prevent me, nor my friends, from saving her before she had swallowed a glassful. The handsome object of her despair hadn't stirred, and he muttered between his teeth, 'Why take her out if she wanted to drown herself?' . . . The question to which this incident gives rise in my mind is, why are the most indifferent men the most beloved? That is what I should like you to tell me, if you can."

Such was his opinion on feminine love. Believing as he did that a man is no longer cherished from the moment he shows any affection for the woman he distinguishes from others, Mérimée probably deemed that the best way of avoiding misery and pain was not to love at all. Perhaps the unknown might have replied to his query that she used precisely the means alluded to to win her illustrious correspondent's heart; but in any case it may be affirmed that she did not succeed.

II.

It is within the present writer's recollection to have met Prosper Mérimée at one of those Parisian cafés which form the resort of the pith of the literary world. The place was generally well attended by famous men, but it was never more crowded than when Mérimée happened to be there. His brilliancy of conversation, the effective manner in which he poured out the overflowing of his wit, made of him one of the most desirable men of Paris. On this occasion a young sculptor of talent was holding forth on artistic theories, and he came to speak of glory with the fervency of an adept. "*La gloire!*" said Mérimée, with a caustic smile. "Do you then believe in glory, young man?"

This exclamation remained in our memory as the dejected profession of faith of a wasted life. Such, indeed, was Prosper Mérimée's; and it can be safely affirmed that this unfortunate result was provoked by counteraction against nature, and the valuable information afforded by his correspondence goes to support this view. Throughout the emptiness of his life prevails. To sum up, he sifted languages, literatures, and characters; he studied his species in all parts of the globe; and, as a just retribution for spurning all subjects of study after devoting his attention to each, instead of drawing consequences from the synthesis of things, he sickened, and looked about him for something to love or to like. Failing in his endeavours, he led the brilliant and sterile life of a delicate *désœuvré*, and listlessly wandered through the drama of life, obviously without object, and certainly without desire. What was the use for him to apply his energy to some great work; to labour for a definite enterprise? He was a sceptic, and much of a cynic too; his soul was as well closed to narrow egotism as to a noble faith in the perfectibility of human attempts. Vanity he had none; he cared not a whit for glory. If he achieved a few masterpieces it was for his amusement, not for others—he despised others too much for that; and in his sometimes heroic contempt, the

trace he would leave of his passage in this world troubled him but slightly. As most men who look upon the details of life too critically, he had lost sight of the good features of human nature only to give paramount importance to its vices. He commenced life on the defensive: suspicion bred bitterness; bitterness bred scepticism, scepticism bred the cynic. It is clear that such negative sentiments were not primarily in his heart, and that they derived their origin from mistaken notions. It is also clear that this singular man's heart never thrilled with love, and that a fatal distrust, on which we have commented, deprived him of a solace which might have made of him a far different individual from the polite, caustic, stoically desponding Mérimée, whom Renan gives as a type of a period. The "Unknown" was merely the recipient of those confidences which every mind has an irrepressible tendency to unfold; but that alone is no proof of amorous affection. Proud as he was, Mérimée doubtless selected her as the fittest person to preserve his secrets; and perhaps another deception might be added to the others, could he know that even this trust has been betrayed. Howbeit, the *Inconnue* was no more than a confidante. She might perchance have been more had she liked; and her own letters to Mérimée would show if she is responsible for preventing a very distinguished man from seeing clearly through his mistakes, and reconciling himself with his fellow-creatures.

This, however, is merely speculation, and one should only reason by facts on such delicate ground. What facts we have lead us to point to Mérimée as the most unhappy of men. In the tumult of court life, amidst the uproar of the gayest society, he was more forlorn than in the solitude of a desert. His heart was dry to the core; the eventualities of daily existence were to him as the phases of a nightmare, in which he was forced into playing a part although convinced of its vanity. He must, indeed, have longed to cast off the clay as well as his official gear. His death was in unison with the mournfulness of his life: it occurred shortly after the overthrow of the Second Empire. France was going to pieces; no one thought of a single individual in this whirling tempest, and Mérimée's demise was not more noticed than a simple soldier's. He expired in the arms of two faithful English friends. Two hours before breathing his last he wrote the note which closes the second volume of his correspondence. He was borne silently to the grave, momentarily forgotten. No doubt he would have approved of this oblivion and indifference.

Houses of the Poor in Towns.

Questions which take strong hold of the benevolent feelings are often discussed to little purpose, from neglecting in the first instance to divide the subject properly. If points in which it is possible to effect direct improvement are not distinguished from other points in which improvement can only be the work of indirect and often remote agencies, practicable and impracticable proposals have to bear a common discredit. The Housing of the Poor is a question of this kind. Even in the best considered enumerations of the mischiefs incident to the crowded and unwholesome dens in which the poor, whether in town or country, too commonly live there is often much confusion between evils which admit of a precise and assignable remedy, and evils which will only disappear in the train of other evils of which they are really the offspring. Till lately, at all events, the feature in the housing of the poor which has been most generally singled out for attack is overcrowding. All the ills that the poor are heirs to have been set down to this cause; and if the reformer has been unable to resist the conviction that the conditions which generate overcrowding are not within his control, he has been tempted to give the matter up as hopeless. Yet all the time he has simply approached the subject from the wrong side. He has considered not what the houses are which the poor live in, but how many they be that live in them. He has made the mistake from which bodies as eminent as the College of Physicians have not escaped, and assumed that overcrowding is the one crying evil against which war has to be waged. It is the object, in part, of this paper to show how injurious this mistake may be to the classes about whom it is made. The question will chiefly be treated in its relation to the poor who live in towns. Not of course that the poor who live in the country are not quite as badly off, both as regards the quality of their houses and the number of dwellers in them, as the town poor. Before the laws of sanitary science were properly understood, it was a common theory that the peasant in his cottage enjoyed, at all events, the blessings of pure air and water fresh from the spring. That pleasing delusion has been disposed of. We now know that air and water are as likely to be poisoned in the country as in the town, and we know, too, that though the overcrowding of houses in a given area is naturally greater in towns, the overcrowding of human beings within a given house is quite as great in the country. But, except in one important particular which will be pointed out further on, these evils must be traced to different causes, and be treated by different remedies from those which apply to

the case of the town poor. And, great as the need with regard to the country undoubtedly is, it is hardly quite so immediate as it is with regard to towns. In the country the mischief is not being made worse every day by the natural increase of population, and by the effect of what are called street improvements. Nor is the action of the mischief on those subjected to it so continuous in the country as it is in towns. The labourer's work lies, for the most part, in the fields, and the children's playground is in the open air, not in the stifling back-yard of a small town court. If the inmates of the cottage are poisoned by want of drainage and ventilation at night, they breathe fresh air for a part at least of each day. In towns, on the other hand, the room in which the poor spend the day is often that in which they have spent the night; or if they go to work in shops or factories, it is the place, not the atmosphere, that they change. In towns, too, the evil has been growing worse every year until quite lately, and in all but a few it is still growing worse. We sometimes speak as though in London there had been a real change for the better, owing to the efforts made by the various philanthropic societies which have taken the matter in hand. But these efforts have not only made no appreciable impression upon the defective housing they found in existence, they have not even kept down the additions which are constantly being made to it. The annual increase of population in London is about 40,000, and the clearance required to make room for a single new building—the Law Courts—turned 4,000 persons out of their houses. The oldest of the philanthropic societies has been at work for more than a quarter of a century, and all that it and its successors have done in that time is to provide decent houses for 26,000 persons. If this be set against the growth of population in five-and-twenty years, and the repeated clearances made during that time in every direction and for every sort of purpose, it will be seen that in London the work has still to be begun.

Happily it is no longer necessary to prove that so long as the houses of the poor are wanting in all the requisites which go to make life healthy or decent, it is of little avail to attempt to improve their condition in other ways. As the connection between mind and body has been better understood, we have learnt that it would be as reasonable to look for grapes from thorns as to expect sobriety and energy from men who habitually breathe air which, if they were not acclimatized to it, would at once generate low fever. Acclimatization is not a process which can be undergone without paying the penalty; and familiarity with unhealthy surroundings, though it may act as a safeguard against acute disease, must tend to produce a general depression of system which is hostile alike to either bodily or mental activity, and naturally tempts those who suffer from it to seek a momentary stimulus in gin. All this will here be taken for granted. The points to which this article will be confined are the causes to which the evils in question are to be attributed, and the nature of the remedies of which they severally admit.

The causes are mainly two—the unwholesomeness of the houses in which the poor live, and the number of persons who live in them. The first is, as will be shown, the more important; but it will be convenient to clear the ground by beginning with the second. Overcrowding in towns is of two sorts—the overcrowding of single houses by human beings, and the overcrowding of a given area by blocks of houses. The second kind, however, will more properly be spoken of under the head of unwholesomeness, because the way in which it principally acts is by depriving each house of proper ventilation. The overcrowding of single houses, or more accurately of single rooms, has always made a strong though not a fruitful impression on the public imagination. The reason probably is that the mischievous results are of a kind especially easy to realize. People who live in houses where, professedly at all events, sanitary requirements have been properly attended to, may find some difficulty in fancying what it would be to live in houses where these requirements are systematically neglected. But every one has had some experience of what it means to be in an overcrowded room, and can conceive what it would be to have to undress and sleep and dress in such a room without any means of securing privacy even as regards persons of different sex. This is the state of things which the mention of the houses of the poor as things needing improvement usually calls up to the minds of benevolent persons; and certainly nothing can cry more loudly for change than a system under which every report of a Medical Officer of Health in a large town tells of single rooms inhabited by fathers and mothers, by grown-up sons and daughters, and by a young man taken in as a lodger. Under such circumstances as these neither health nor decency can be maintained except by exceptional good fortune. There is not the cubic space, not a fifth part perhaps of the cubic space, which physicians tell us is essential to the one; there is not the separation between the sexes which natural instinct tells us is essential to the other.

But although overcrowding is the evil which most strikes the imagination, it is not the evil which ought to receive most attention. In determining what are the points in the condition of the poor which we will try to mend, the first inquiry should always be, what are the points which most admit of mending? It is better to aim at attainable reforms, even if they leave untouched much that we should like to alter, than to aim at reforms which are unattainable, and by consequence to end in achieving no reform at all. Now, a crusade against overcrowding is in a great measure a crusade against an inevitable incident of the conditions under which the poor live. It is mainly due to the desire to save in rent. Two rooms cost more than one, and unless a poor man is more than ordinarily alive to considerations of health and decency, he will be tempted to make one do. If he once gets accustomed to making one do, it is a chance if he ever learns to enlarge his wants. He portions out his income on the assumption that only so much of it will be wanted for rent, and unless his wages increase faster than his family, he will never be in a position to

pay more rent without a sense of positive sacrifice. This is a cause of overcrowding which no legislation can touch. Supposing that the occupation of private houses were placed under regulations resembling those in force in common lodging-houses, these rules could be of no force without a system of inspection of the most searching and ubiquitous kind. Every house must be registered, the authorities must be furnished with particulars of all of the inmates, and they must be empowered to enter at all times to make sure that none had been omitted from the list or misdescribed as regards sex or age. The mere mention of such a scheme is enough to show its impossibility. The poor must, for the most part, be cured of overcrowding by the tedious and circuitous process of raising their standard of living both as regards health and decency. It is true that in many cases overcrowding exists in combination with the want of sufficient house-room, and so far as this is the case the evil can be dealt with in various ways. But there is good reason to suspect that it would not be removed by the provision of sufficient house-room. Instances are constantly found in which there is great overcrowding in one house while rooms are standing empty in an adjoining house. Those who have taken the management of house property in the hope of making their relation to the inmates a means of leading them to a better way of life speak of the difficulty they have in persuading their tenants to make their lodging keep pace with the growth of their children; and even among a class which is able to pay for better accommodation there is often a considerable indisposition to spend money on this object. To have three rooms instead of two, for example, would in the eyes of many working-men amount to being over-housed. They would think it a waste of money, much as a man with 1,000*l.* a year would think it a waste of money to fit up his house with the latest and most scientific appliances in the way of ventilating apparatus. What to the classes above them are absolute necessaries are to them mere luxuries; and until they have learned by observation and comparison to estimate them differently, overcrowding will continue. By degrees, it may be hoped, the improved health and comfort of those who have paid the additional rent which is demanded for better accommodation will become too conspicuous for the lesson to be missed. Actual teaching may do something to hasten the change, and in proportion as working-men come to understand, or to take on faith, the elementary laws of health, they will be more willing to make the money sacrifices which obedience to the laws of health often entails. But for the present men who feel thus will be in a small minority, and so far as legislation is concerned they must remain in a small minority.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude from this that Parliament can do nothing in the matter. It cannot prevent overcrowding, so far as this overcrowding means the collection of too many persons in a single room, but it can prevent the creation of new causes leading to overcrowding. One of the most prolific of these is the demolition of houses to make way for new streets, new public buildings, new lines of railway, and new

stations. It is particularly the business of Parliament to interfere in this case, because without the intervention of Parliament the evil which has to be dealt with could never have arisen. The consent of Parliament is required for all these improvements. Railway companies and municipal authorities cannot ordinarily obtain the land they need for their several purposes unless Parliament gives them the power of purchasing it without the will of the owner, and supplements all defects of title. There is no obligation upon Parliament to do this, and, consequently, if any harm follows from doing it, Parliament must bear the responsibility. The wholesale clearances which have contributed so largely to the overcrowding of great towns are as much the work of the Legislature as though they had been effected in pursuance of an Act for the speedier eviction of poor tenants. The least that Parliament can do, now that the effect of these clearances has become known, is to take care that there shall be no more of them. Under proper management the construction of every one of these new streets and buildings might have been made an occasion of improving the condition of the persons evicted to make room for them. All that was required was that part of the cleared ground, or other ground in the immediate neighbourhood of it, should have been reserved for the erection of houses suited to the class, and accommodating in the aggregate at least the same number. In London, at all events, it cannot be said that the necessary space was not to be found; for near every block of street or railway improvements there is usually a large tract of unoccupied land. Nor would Parliament have been going beyond the range of its duty in insisting that ground should be reserved for this purpose, since without something of the kind it is impossible properly to compensate the persons who are turned out of their homes. It is universally recognised when Parliament is dealing with persons of a higher class, that public objects are to be pursued with the utmost possible regard for vested interests. Now a vested interest is only an expression for the fact that the measures necessary to attain a particular public object happen to give A. more than his fair share of inconvenience. Every member of the community is bound to make his proportionate sacrifice to the public good, and if the whole burden of the sacrifice is laid upon A., he is just as much injured as though he were subjected to some special tax. We recognise this fact by giving him the value of his interest. Now, when a mass of poor tenants are concerned, their interest in their miserable lodgings hardly admits of being reduced to money. They may be turned out by their landlords at a week's notice, and it has therefore been assumed that to give them a week's rent would make everything straight. But if there are no houses in the neighbourhood for them to move into, this is no compensation at all. They cannot get even as good rooms as those they have been turned out of. If they want to stay on in the same neighbourhood, they must crowd into some house which is already fuller than it ought to be; if they move to a distance, they probably find that they leave their work behind them. It follows from this that any adequate

compensation which can be given them must take the form of a provision of new houses, at a rent not materially greater than that charged for the houses which have been pulled down. Both because Parliament need not consent to these eviction schemes unless it likes, and may consequently sell its consent on its own terms, and because the principle of compensation to vested interests requires that no one man or set of men shall be seriously the worse by reason of any public improvement, it ought in future to be made a condition of all large clearances that the tenants who have been evicted shall have the opportunity of housing themselves at least as well and as conveniently as they have hitherto been able to do. The only consideration which ought to stand in the way would be one founded on the inability of Parliament to turn house-builder. But there is no need for it to do more than decree that proper sites shall be reserved for houses of a particular class. Private or philanthropic enterprise might be trusted to finish the work. As we shall see further on, the acquisition of the site is more than half the battle. There is abundance of money forthcoming to build, provided that the ground on which to build can be had on reasonable terms.

This, then, is all that can be done to diminish overcrowding in the way of direct legislation. Any other measures that may be useful for the same end must have reference to the general condition of the poor, and the best method of improving it. They must be directed to lessen not the evil itself, but the causes which make the poor either less alive to it, or less able to avoid it.

But there is another evil quite as universally distributed, and even more mischievous in its results, which does come within the scope of direct legislation. Parliament can, if it is so minded, enact that every house shall be wholesome. The conditions which make houses, as distinct from situation, wholesome are few and perfectly ascertained. A house must be properly open to the air, it must be provided with sufficient drainage, and it must be secured against the worst forms of damp. In theory, Parliament has the same right to insist on every one of these conditions being satisfied before a house is let or sold for habitation that it has to insist that any other article sold shall be what it professes to be. The law does not allow a baker to sell adulterated bread, or a grocer to sell adulterated sugar, nor is it accepted as a defence that their customers wish to buy bread or sugar at a price too low to allow of their being sold in a pure state. If a shopkeeper wishes to meet the views of this class of customer, he must truly describe the goods sold, and say: This loaf is partly bread and partly potato flour, or, This sugar is brought up to the required weight by the addition of so much sand. This precaution is found sufficient as regards adulteration of food, because the most economical buyers would refuse food, however cheap, which avowed itself to be partly poison. But supposing that the poor could not be trusted to reject poison, supposing that a baker made loaves of some composition which would inevitably generate disease, and, though the fact was plainly stated

on the label affixed to every loaf, continued to find ready purchasers among ignorant or reckless persons, the law would not content itself with insisting that the nature of the composition should be declared to the buyers. It would prohibit the sale altogether; it would declare that, since the poor had not sufficient knowledge or self-control to prevent them from buying poison, in the belief that it would serve the purpose, or must be made to serve the purpose, of wholesome food, they must not have the choice of buying it offered them. All the arguments which apply to the sale of food so adulterated as to be positively poisonous apply with still greater force to the sale and letting of houses so built or arranged as to be positively poisonous. The mischief done is fully as great, for no poison can in the long run do more to injure health and shorten life than the poison conveyed in foul air or damp walls. The inability of the buyer to defend himself against an unprincipled seller is quite as complete, for the causes which make houses unwholesome are not always easy of detection, and even if it were customary to label houses "damp," "undrained," "no ventilation," there would be great risk that the difficulty of finding room, and the desire to pay a low rent, might lead many to let these warnings go unheeded. There is a clear case, then, for the application of the treatment which has been, or under similar circumstances would be, applied to adulteration. Let the law declare that every builder selling a house, and every landlord letting a house, shall be bound to sell or let not merely a house—a building consisting of four walls and a roof—but a wholesome house, a house in a fit state to be lived in, a house in which there is a sufficiency of air, and of air such as human beings can breathe with safety, a house in which damp will not give rheumatism, or sewer gas breed fever. If a building fails to satisfy these requirements, it ought not to be ranked as a house; and the sale or letting, for the purpose of habitation, of any building not answering the definition of a house should be made unlawful.

Of course the full operation of such a statute would have to be postponed for some years. But the principle might be at once applied to all new houses; and as regards houses already in existence it might be applied in conjunction with another provision which would make its application very much easier. The suggestion which has lately met with most support from persons anxious to improve the homes of the poor is that the municipal authorities in towns shall be empowered to destroy all houses condemned by the officers of health, to compensate the owners, and to obtain sites by compulsory purchase for the building of new houses to accommodate the inhabitants. So much has lately been said upon the necessity for an Act of this kind, that it need not be demonstrated here. The three facts which make it necessary are the impossibility of improving many of the houses now inhabited by the poor; the natural unwillingness of the municipal authorities to use even their present powers of demolition when there are no means of compensating the owner for the loss of his property; and the legal and financial difficulty of obtaining sites for new

houses. Anyone who wishes to see these three points proved will find all he wants in an article by Miss Octavia Hill, in the June number of *Macmillan's Magazine*. It is more to the purpose of the present paper to show that unless such an Act be accompanied by an Act forbidding the sale or letting of unwholesome houses, it will be of very little use.

Let it be assumed that the powers which it is proposed to vest in municipalities have been used as extensively as the case requires, that all the houses condemned by the officers of health have been pulled down, and that new ones have been built in their place. A great many of these houses will have been erected by private builders, for it is not to be supposed that the philanthropic societies which may be expected to lead the way in this process will have means sufficient to take it entirely, or even mainly, upon themselves. Their especial usefulness will be as pioneers and examples to others. It may be conceded, too, that these houses will be free from many of the evils belonging to the houses they will have displaced. They will have been built upon sites properly laid out, and so they will escape the want of ventilation which is unavoidable where one row of houses is built upon the gardens of another row, or where the only access to a whole street is through the doorways of the houses which shut out the air at each end. But the private builders left to themselves will not take much pains with the interior of their houses. They will be sure of letting them as soon as they are finished, and there will be no reason why they should spend money in preventing the ground-damp from rising through the floors, or in constructing adequate drains. The cost of ventilating a soil pipe, of disconnecting the scullery sink from the sewer, of providing a proper outlet for the waste water, so that the cistern shall not be filled with sewer gas, and of similar sanitary precautions of the simplest kind, is not great, but to the ordinary small builder it will seem a perfectly needless addition to the cost of a house; and if he is left free to incur this cost, or to leave it alone, he will in most cases choose the latter alternative. Besides this, these arrangements must be kept in repair, and for a long time to come, at all events, the class of tenants which will inhabit the houses will be specially likely to put them out of repair. Even if the landlord sees his way to recovering the cost of repairs out of the tenants in the shape of increased rent, it will save him risk, trouble, and present outlay if he leaves things as they are. There can be little doubt that without such a law to enforce wholesomeness, a large number of the new houses built under such a scheme as that in force in Glasgow would be unwholesome to start with; and that even if by a miracle they were wholesome to start with, the larger part of them would have ceased to be so before five years were over. On the other hand, the possession by all municipalities of powers resembling those in force at Glasgow would very much smooth the working of a law compelling all houses to be and remain wholesome. Any further increase of the evil would be prevented by the immediate application of the law to all houses built after the passing of the Act; and as regards

houses already in existence, they might be examined and reported on by the officers of health, and arranged in classes according as they were capable or incapable of substantial improvement. Those belonging to the latter class would be at once condemned. They would be cleared away as fast as new houses could be provided for their inmates, and their owner would be paid a sum, to be settled by arbitration, in consideration of the loss sustained by him. If, on the other hand, a house, or a group of houses, were reported capable of improvement, the nature and probable cost of the repairs would be indicated to the owner, and he would be ordered to have them executed by a certain date, with the option of selling the houses at a valuation in the event of his not wishing to lay out further money on them. These measures would need time for their full development; but in proportion as they came into operation the ultimate end of such legislation, the making the sale or letting of any house not provided with certain specified sanitary appliances an offence against the law, would be brought nearer.

It will probably be conceded that such a law as has here been described would, if properly carried out, constitute a complete remedy for the unwholesomeness of houses. If the essential sanitary requisites were defined by Act of Parliament, and if no house which did not possess them were allowed to be sold or let for habitation, it would obviously be the interest of the landlord to put his houses into proper sanitary repair in the first instance, and to keep them in that state afterwards. Nor would this involve any grievance beyond those isolated cases of individual hardship which are inevitable whenever any large measure of reform has to be carried out. No doubt the tendency of the law would be to drive men without capital out of the business, since they would not have the ready money with which to pay for the repairs. But the interest of the community seems to demand that some trades should be in the hands of men who can afford to wait for a return on their investments, and the trade in houses is one of these. The provision for compensation if a house is destroyed, and the facilities given for getting rid of the house in the event of the owner not caring to spend more money on it, seem to meet these cases, so far as they can be met by any general rule. The objections which will probably be urged against the proposal are two—one relating to the machinery of the Act, the other to the amount and incidence of its cost. There is a strong feeling in this country that of late years we have been too much given over into the hands of the irrepressible inspector; and if wholesome houses could only be obtained by submission to a new and stringent system of surveillance, it may be questioned whether the majority of Englishmen would not rather be let alone in unwholesome houses. There will be no need, however, for anything of the kind. The main requirements of the Act will be satisfied when a house is reported by the surveyor to come up to the prescribed standard in respect of sanitary appliances. When once this inspection has been made, the result will hold good for a long period, because some of the most im-

portant of these appliances are of a kind which cannot well get out of order. Already in towns a certain amount of supervision is exercised over new houses. The walls must be of a certain thickness, the distance from the opposite houses must measure a certain number of feet. All that is now proposed is, that the official examination should be extended to essentials as regards drainage and ventilation; that pipes and traps should be forthcoming in proper places; that there should be no unguarded communication between the sewers and the interior of the house; that there should be a sufficient use of concrete in the foundations; that no room should be without due provision for the withdrawal and supply of air. As regards all these matters, a house which had once been reported fit for habitation might remain fit for many years. A periodical inspection might be made at each renewal of a lease or change of ownership, and the correction of defects coming into existence in the interval might be left to the existing agencies for the inspection and removal of nuisances. The other objection is the increased cost of wholesome as compared with unwholesome houses. If unwholesome houses were allowed to exist side by side with wholesome houses, this might be a difficulty of great moment, because of the natural disposition on the part of the poor to consider rent before health. But inasmuch as no houses will be allowed to fall short of a certain standard, there will be no opportunity for the exercise of this preference. House-rent may rise somewhat in consequence of the change in the law, but it will rise universally. If it is said that this will not make the grievance less, the answer is, that just as it would be better that the poor should be compelled to give 9*d.* for a loaf made of flour, rather than 6*d.* for one made partly of flour and partly of powdered white lead, so it is better that they should pay 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week for a wholesome room, rather than 2*s.* 6*d.* for an unwholesome room. The shilling added to the rent will be more than saved by that greater ability to work and to refrain from drink which will come with better health and better habits. Nor need the rise in rent be at all considerable. When once builders know what will be required in every new house, more attention will be given to the manufacture of simple sanitary appliances on a large scale, and at a low rate. The increase in the demand will have its ordinary effect of cheapening production, and it will in the end be found that, but for the perverted ingenuity of builders, pure air can be had at no greater cost than foul air. The houses of the poor ought not to be made a vehicle for sanitary experiments; it will be enough if their arrangements conform to those elementary laws of drainage and ventilation which it is as cheap to obey as to disregard.

The Old Cosmopolitan.

When the Hon. Raikes Lawless, fifth son of the eleventh Baron Lawless of Bletchingley, died in the dull season at Les Sources, the event created but little sensation either in that favourite watering-place or elsewhere. It was announced neither in *The Times*, *Galignani*, nor the *Courrier des Sources*. No member of the Lawless family hastened to Les Sources to make the preliminary arrangements for obsequies which were simple to meanness. The modest *cortége* consisted of Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, who had latterly acted as banker and almoner to the deceased, plodding along under his white cotton umbrella, and—so far as the threshold of the street door—of the French medical man who had attended the deceased in his last illness. Yet in his five and forty years of feverish life—"æt. 63" was inscribed on the rude coffin-plate of tinsel, —Raikes Lawless had made as many friends as any half-dozen of his average contemporaries. He had a brother and several sisters surviving, a score of first cousins, nephews and nieces innumerable, and finally, a couple of highly respectable sons, one of them a dignitary of the Church, the other an eminently well-informed Secretary of Legation.

The fact was, there was an hereditary fatality in the Lawless family. From time immemorial each second generation had gone more or less to the dogs, while the one that succeeded atoned for the follies of its fathers by assuming a double portion of starch and austerity. And it must be owned that the ritualistic canon of Canterbury and the prim secretary at San Marino had had reasons in abundance for blushing for their more brilliant parent. While the one of them was cropping his thin hair and scrupulously passing the razor over an almost beardless chin; while the other was fast turning bald, and training a couple of wisps over a lofty but meagre forehead, the father was carrying a vigorous head of hair that all his worries had only grizzled slightly, and their respective *chevelures* were types of their respective individualities and reputations. To do them justice, the sons had had some cause of complaint. More than once social considerations had forced them to compound their parent's debts, or at least for as many of them as he thought fit to submit in his schedule of liabilities. After repeated threats of cutting him off with a shilling, they had finally severed personal connection with the prodigal, merely remitting a modest monthly pension to the far country where he was compelled to vegetate debt-bound. Scandal fairly wearied out, had almost ceased to talk about him. And when the reverend canon learned at last that he was orphaned, who shall question the fervent gratitude of

the ejaculations in which he thanked Providence for his unfortunate father's release?

Yet Raikes Lawless in his time had had as many friends, and moved to the last in as extensive a circle of appreciative acquaintance, as any man. Had he even had the luck to die in the height of the season at Les Sources, if many enquiries had not been made at his door, at least he would have had plenty of mourners to see him to his resting-place among the cypresses. To the very last he was eminently popular in certain sets of the English community there. He was as much at home in the French Cercle as in his countrymen's club. In the sumptuous apartments occupied by American millionaires he was made almost invariably welcome. No wonder. He was an honourable member of an ancient family whose fame was historical. He was still what he always had been—one of the most agreeable of companions; irresistible in a *tête-à-tête*, because he knew so well how to suit his talk to his company. He was an inimitable *causeur* and *raconteur*, for he was blessed with a tenacious memory as well as a ready wit and a keen sense of the humorous, and he drew the stories that lost nothing in the telling, from the ample store of his varied experience. To the last his manners were perfect—when he pleased—with men for the most part he was brusque and boisterous. But the caressing change that came over them when he softened his voice and addressed himself to women was the more insensibly flattering. He would talk with a smile so sweet and winning that even the somewhat sensual fulness of his lips and chin could not spoil it. That smile of his should have had much to answer for, and yet there was little hypocrisy in it. Lawless was good natured, and in a sense good hearted, although his conduct had been condemned as highly reprehensible even by the easier morality of the older generation of cosmopolitans. But time had mellowed his reputation, and it might be presumed that he had repented or expiated one or two scandalously notorious incidents in his earlier career. The sins of his youth won him the respectful admiration of young sinners still, while the most excellent of women believed their company had a chastening influence on the veteran reprobate, as very likely it had.

Yes: had Lawless died during the season at Les Sources, his death must have made a sensation and left a blank. Everyone would have missed the loud cheery voice that enlivened the club, especially towards the small hours, the rich rolling laugh, and the bluff burly figure. For half a dozen years at the least he had been a celebrity in the place. He came there at first, heaven knows how or why, turning up at the Hôtel des Etrangers at the beginning of a winter. Time at first hung upon his hands, but that winter they took to higher play than before in the English club, and no doubt Lawless had a good deal to say in fixing the stakes. Two franc points were multiplied by ten, with a couple of Napoleons on the rubber, and the odds in Napoleons on the course of the game. Lawless, of course, played whist admirably, as he did every game of skill: a little too brilliantly, perhaps, and his foreign tactics would

sometimes puzzle his English partners; but science pulled him through in the end, and he made an excellent thing of it. It was matter of small surprise to anybody, that he kept up appearances and honourably paid his way all through that first fortunate season, and the knowing ones counted confidently on his reappearance in the following one, much as he abused the dreary dullness of the place. He did come back, sure enough. But science cannot control the uncertain elements of luck; and for a whole fortnight at the beginning of that second year he scarcely held an honour in his hand. When the cards did come over to him, and he should have had his revenge, he was baulked by a couple of young and speculative Americans levanting heavily in his debt. The knot of high players had been driven to assent to running accounts and monthly settlements under penalty of sacrificing the high rubbers, and this was the result. The sum of his losses was a bagatelle to that of the gains and losses of his palmier days, yet that brief campaign proved decisive to his future destiny. He quitted the Hôtel des Étrangers for the modest apartment in the unfashionable side street where he died, and that apartment became his home henceforth. How he lived was always an inscrutable mystery to his most familiar friends, although, on the subject of his embarrassments generally, he was freespoken enough. He dressed decently, he hacked a solid though sober animal in the season, he dined quietly at a good restaurant when he was not entertained elsewhere, as he commonly was. Above all, he was always to be found at the whist tables of an afternoon or evening when he was not seated at *écarté* with the Frenchmen, playing for stakes ruinously high for him, and paying up honourably when he failed to win. But never again was he suffered to stir from Les Sources on *parole* or otherwise. The ties that bound him to the second *étage* let to him by the buxom *modiste* below might be as nearly invisible as those spun by the soft-voiced enchantress in Thalaba, but it was just as difficult to break them. Otherwise he would never have lingered on when everything and everyone was gone that helped to make his life endurable; lingered on in the dismal isolation of solitude, like Campbell's last man, but with Remorse and Despair for his companions in place of Faith and Hope. Doubtless he had a hard time enough even when he had some sort of society or stimulant, and when for the best part of each successive day he could look forward to some kind of excitement. If the conversation flagged of a sudden after a cheery dinner, the smile would die as suddenly on his lips, and a film of gloom would extinguish the laugh in his eye. It is to be feared that he was generally hounded home by a pack of the blue devils that were always in waiting, and hunted in his broken slumbers by hopes that had turned to nightmares. But in the long baking summer, when every soul who could go had been scorched out of the place; when doctors, waiters, and livery stable hacks had all made an exodus to the cooler shores of the ocean, then those blue devils must have got him down and fairly worried him:

only that iron constitution of his, and those once indomitable spirits, could have prolonged his wretchedness for another season.

Five and thirty years ago no man started in life with brighter hopes and fairer chances. By that hereditary law of alternations we have alluded to, his father, the eleventh Lord Lawless, had been highly respectable and something more. He had held a somewhat commanding position first in the Lower House and then in the Upper one. He was not a very wealthy man and he had a fair quiverful of children, but he had picked out his clever younger son to push in diplomacy and do the family credit. He had friends in high places all over Europe, and could furnish Raikes with excellent introductions everywhere. The young man, as it happened, had good Catholic connections too—an "Open Sesame" to the innermost circles at the courts of the Pontiff and the Italian Princes, of their Most Christian and Catholic Majesties, and of the Kaiser. Among these connections, and his Protestant ones, were sundry ancient aunts, rich and childless, who were ready enough to pet and tip the clever, captivating lad who had been something of a scapegrace from his earliest boyhood. Had he only known how to be wise in time, had he only sown his wild oats and had done with it, he might have gone any reasonable distance at any rational pace, he might have kicked over the traces any number of times, he might have reformed and inherited, married happily, won reputation and harvested honours, and died rich and highly respected.

He made a brilliant *début*, as might have been expected. He threw off as attaché in Paris in the latter days of the elder branch of the Bourbons. His father had offered graceful hospitalities to the brother of Louis the Martyr while the Prince was an exile and a vagabond in England, and Charles X. was willing enough to repay them. He was connected by marriage with the Polignac family. He had the *entrée* in the most exclusive Parisian salons, and he profited by it. He read ravenously in his *moments perdus;* returning home from dance or dissipation of any kind, he read himself to sleep with plays or novels or the most solid political literature, as the case might be. He studied politics in his light desultory fashion, in season and out of season. In those days he had his ambitions—ambitions he would perhaps have laughed at later had he not had so much more cause to sigh—and with somewhat similar capabilities, he dreamed a career like that of Talleyrand. Unluckily for his worldly success he wanted the constancy of purpose and calculating selfishness of the ex-bishop, and the times were slow, and he sought to shoot excitement in the flying moments. He was ever in love or fancying himself in love, and *bonnes fortunes* came so easily to him, that he was always being on with the new love before he was well off with the old. He made enemies, and spiteful ones, as fast as friends; Medeas were mixing poisoned cups behind this English Jason, and Didos were gulping down their sighs and plotting revenge. His reputation was growing daily and daily diminishing as well. His reputation, such as it

was, came enormously expensive to him. He was naturally generous, and where he pretended to love he lavished presents. He was high-spirited, and he was no Churchill, to sell his favours to duchesses who might gladly have bought them. He had a younger son's portion irregularly paid, with tastes and habits that might have suited a Marquis of Hertford, or the owner of the purse of Fortunatus. There was one way of replenishing the purse that was always on the flow, and a very tempting one. Those were the days when Frescati's was in full swing, and counting its reckless clients among the leading celebrities of Europe. The chink of the *rouleaux* changing hands was heard perpetually from the first-floor windows of the Palais Royal. Not a party in Paris, public or private, where free play was not one of the amusements of the evening. It was about the time when the future Lord Dalling, a diplomat like Lawless, won the 5,000*l.* in Paris that proved the stepping-stones of his fortune, as Mr. Hayward has told us in a recently republished essay. Lawless was a born gamester. Through life he always loved high stakes in everything—loved them the better that he knew a run of ill-luck would be ruin. When heavy losses might have proved his salvation, of course the Devil pretended to stand his friend. Lawless held on his way; the almost penniless Englishman led the *train* of a prince, and the end of all things came when Polignac published his *ordonnances*, and the legitimate dynasty of St. Louis vacated the Tuileries to the advantage of the Citizen King.

Lawless never had such a time again. He had acquired the costly tastes that were to be his bane, and made the great acquaintances who helped to ruin him. He was transferred to the Court of Florence, and was as welcome to the Grand Duke as ever he had been to the King. He had come to have implicit faith in his luck, and counted, of course, on something like his old income. He launched himself dashingly in Florentine society, as if his luck must assure his making a brilliant voyage of it. He gave bachelor dinners at his hotel and at the Luna, that, in their way, out-shone those of his chief, and were at least as much sought after. There was no more brilliant bachelor equipage than his in the Cascine. He made love at once to a daughter of the Minister *pour le bon motif;* and to the fascinating Principessa di Fiesole for the *mauvais* one. He embroiled himself with his chief accordingly at the very moment when he stood most in need of good backing from the Legation. For the springs were running low that had so long fed his extravagance. At games of chance he scarcely cleared sufficient to pay his gloves and his whip-lashes. He shone and won at whist and *écarté*, but safe gains and modest returns no longer satisfied his out-goings or aspirations. The sparkling attaché came to unutterable smash. The vengeful Minister threatened an action for breach of promise, which would have been ridiculous, or else the horsewhip, which would have been worse than dangerous; and one course and the other were alike superfluous to the gratification of his vengeance. Lawless was hopelessly insolvent, and

utterly ruined as a rising public man. He withdrew with characteristic dignity from His Majesty's diplomatic service, and started adventurer on his own account.

When he came to the surface, after his first ugly plunge in the chilling waters of adversity, with his vigorous health and buoyant temperament, he found his circulation all the better. If his very miscellaneous acquaintance happened to know that he had come to pecuniary grief, no one of them thought any the worse of him. Perhaps these harum-scarum years that followed his resignation were the most enjoyable in his life, when he went knocking about all over Europe, giving care and his creditors the slip, with nothing like a habitation or a settled home, and with all his worldly wealth in his portmanteaux and dressing case. He was the Flying Dutchman of cosmopolitan society, here to-day and gone to-morrow, although his hosts generally were ready enough to keep him. From the banks of the Scheldt to those of the Danube, he was always made welcome in a country house, whether battues, balls, or private theatricals were the order of the day. If he put up at an hotel anywhere on any of the grand routes, ten to one in a day or two he had the offer of a lift in a travelling chariot. It would have been far better for him in the end, had he been content to leave well alone. He was growing more prudent as he got on in years; occasionally he would burn his fingers or break a small bone in an escapade; but as a rule his whist and billiards franked him from one billet to another, and left him the means of being very generous to the servants, who welcomed him cap in hand, or took leave of him tear in eye, according to their sexes. His noble father began to believe that Raikes had sacrificed sufficiently to the Nemesis of his generation, and might still be no discredit to it, if little credit. So he volunteered some help to a man who seemed to be helping himself, and offered to renew a very small allowance.

Raikes Lawless came to shipwreck on that skeleton of a competency. That slight taste of a fixed income suggested to him the idea of affluent independence, and turned his dreams in the direction of matrimony. He cast the handkerchief to a widow, with a handsome jointure of her own and a good deal of property in the funds and at the India House—he was in residence at Rome that winter. He was not a bad man of business when he chose to apply his mind to a transaction; but he met his match in the widow and her friends. They insisted that all the property should be strictly settled on herself and the issue of the marriage, and there for some time the negotiations hung. Raikes's Bedouin instincts warned him to be wise in time, but he hated wasting trouble, and had taken a fancy to the widow's fortune. He was like the horse who has smelt the sieveful of oats, and cannot for the life of him help nibbling, although the halter that awaits him hangs dangling before his eyes. He married on a large income and became a miserable man, as he made his wife a miserable woman. They had a house in Brook Street for the season, and out of it tried living at her late husband's seat in Hampshire.

They had a couple of children—the future canon and the attaché. They had a great many nuptial squalls, often blowing into storms, and occasionally to tornadoes. They separated informally but finally by mutual consent, and Lawless left the lady in England and resumed his roving life on the Continent. No doubt his name and title and a couple of charming children were not the only *souvenirs* he left her of their brief connection. Thenceforward she had the privilege of participating in his money troubles and ministering to his voracious necessities. Whatever the terms they separated on, it is certain a good deal of money must have been subsequently remitted him from time to time, although probably the payments were of uncertain amount, and made at very irregular intervals. Any regular pension he would infallibly have mortgaged, as he did later, when his lady died and he claimed a small annuity under the settlement.

It was at this time that he entered on what was, in some respects, the most respectable phase of his existence. That he lived apart from his wife—no one being bound to understand that their connection was permanently severed—did him no injury with the men he mixed with, and rather helped him with the women. He had married and "ranged himself," and become a man of means, yet he was free from all matrimonial incumbrances. His habits of life showed all the signs of a substantial financial position. Railways had scarcely begun to be talked about; he had his own neat travelling carriage and his Swiss valet, whose acquaintance with people and things was pretty nearly as extensive as his master's. He revolved from capital to capital, received everywhere in the very best society. Arrived in a place, his first visit was to the Minister, who, even if he were not a personal friend, asked him to dinner as a matter of course. Then he paid his respects straightway to the Court, and was pretty sure to be entertained there, and honoured with special commands for the royal or princely card tables. It was not only that he played a good hand, that he lost his money, when he did lose, with the easy indifference of a grand seigneur, that he spoke the different foreign tongues with an ease and purity that not half a dozen of his compatriots could boast of, that he thought the thoughts of his company, and caught the trick of their speech. But he had much of the French sparkle, the affectation of the German solidity, and a great deal of the Italian suppleness and subtlety. He carried about with him everywhere the bluffness of his English bearing, yet in the presence of princes he could tone it down without either the show or the sense of subserviency, just as he did when paying his court to women. To borrow a vulgar expression, he could always take the measure of their feet; yet somehow when jealous courtiers abused him for a toady, people felt that he was having hard measure dealt him. No wonder courtiers were jealous. It was not lightness alone that made his talk so taking—nor his *bons mots* and readiness of repartee that created his social reputation. His omnivorous reading and retentive memory had served him admirably; without making any pretensions to literary knowledge or systematical learning of any kind, he had passed a

good part of his life with the Shakspeares, Goethes, and Alfieris, and he managed to spare a good deal of his precious time to associating with living writers in their writings. If he met them in the flesh, he made his way straight to their friendship, thanks to the appreciative intimacy he displayed with their choicer beauties. Even the fastidious M. de Chateaubriand found time to correspond with him, after he had paid his respects to the Count in his Swiss seclusion. So carefully shunning pedantry and parade, the changing charms of Lawless's conversation helped him to a great many good personal friendships in the very highest quarters. His dusty travelling carriage had scarcely rolled up to the door of "The Grapes," or "The Golden Stag," than the joyful tidings of his arrival were carried to the blank and cheerless interior of the gloomy *Residenz*. Speedily the jolly host of the Hirsch would come bowing and cringing upstairs, ushering the wooden figure of one of his Serene Transparency's military *Aides-de-Camp*, who would carry his hand to the salute and convey his master's message. And that very afternoon, towards the primitive hour of four, Lawless might be seen picking his way across the weed-grown Platz and under the ill-kept alleys of the Schloss Garten, on his way to a court dinner at the princely residence. It was not all fun by any means. The dinners were sometimes execrable, and the entertainers by no means lively. He hated dining in the afternoon, while breakfast was in process of digestion; the suppers, with their *kalbsfleisch* and sweet sauces and *saurkraut*, were as heavy as the interminable tragedy he might have to sit out in the Grand Ducal box; while the promenade he had to turn out for in the Schloss terrace with the prince at an early hour on the following morning was a painful and questionable remedy for dyspepsia. Yet all these things paid him in more ways than one. Not only was it gratifying to find men in high places delighting to honour him everywhere; not only was it flattering to be hail-fellow-well-met in a congress of crowned heads and princes when he graced one of the aristocratic watering-places with his presence in the height of the season. But it was very profitable as well. He was encouraged to owe money everywhere. It was impossible for the Hof tradespeople to press the friend of their autocratic sovereign when it was inconvenient for him to pay. And we may be sure the friend of princes found private persons in abundance who were only too honoured in being permitted to come down liberally for the honour of his acquaintance. When sojourning anywhere, he need never dine, breakfast, or sup at his own expense. He had his admirers, always eager to lose or lend him their money; it is certain that Baron Guldenstern the Viennese banker, who had set his heart on the Grand Duke of Tuscany's order of Santa Croce, volunteered to honour his cheques one whole winter at Florence; while season after season one of the celebrated Silberschmidts—the great Jewish house in the Zeil of Frankfort—appeared in his train at Wiesbaden and Baden-Baden, sinking a portion of his vast capital in aspiring to a certain mastery over the beautiful but intricate game of picquet.

All this time Lawless had his own ideas of honour and his private code of principles, and he rarely did violence either to the one or the other. He might pay his court to potentates who bored him, and accept the obsequious attention of men he disliked or despised. An adventurer to be successful must live in a certain style, and all callings have their drawbacks. But he always carried his head high, and spoke his mind freely on occasions, especially when suffering from a twinge of the gout or a touch of indigestion. His independence was of actual service to him in the multiplicity of his patrons, for he could afford to play the one off against the others.[1] Were the Prince of Schweinsfleisch to *bouder* his guest for his freedom of speech and the want of deference in his demeanour, he knew he would only lose an agreeable companion. Lawless had nothing to do but order his carriage and drive off to the Grand Duke of Kalbsbraten next day, where he was sure of a hearty welcome. So in money transactions and games of chance and skill. Lawless made little scruple or none when Guldenstern settled his winter's hotel bill at Florence under some delicate pretext. No man could carry off that kind of thing better, or accept a humiliation with a grander air. He clipped Silberschmidt in all *bonhommie* and good fellowship so long as that avaricious but ambitious Israelite thought it worth his while to offer his fleece to the shearer. Had Silberschmidt believed himself the Englishman's master at picquet, Lawless would have stripped him of his money with infinitely greater zest. But one thing we must say. In those more prosperous days Lawless never would rob the young and innocent, even when their overweening self-confidence might have provoked him to read them a lesson. Nay, he more than once saved a juvenile reprobate by a well-timed word of warning, which was sometimes listened to, coming from a man whose somewhat sinister reputation and antecedents entitled him to every respect. Later it might possibly have been otherwise. Extreme necessity guards but few scruples; if it pays attention to strict laws, it is the utmost you can reasonably expect of it. But to the last poor Lawless hated pigeon plucking, although he may have had occasionally to condescend to it as to some other things he despised himself for.

The life for a time was well enough, and then he began to weary of it. He may have been mistaken, but he felt he had been made for other and better things. If he had sowed his wild oats quickly, and settled early and suitably, he had an idea that he might have been very happy in a home. The fancy grew on him, till it positively haunted his broken nights and embittered his long melancholy morning hours. It finished by poisoning the roving existence that so many envied him, but whose excitements, as he knew in his sober moments, had become indispensable to what he called happiness. About his powers and talents at least there could be no question, although he only began to appreciate them himself now that he learned how much and how little they had done for him. His very social successes stung him: if he had gone so far and succeeded so well with so little effort, where might he not have landed himself

had he only taken life in earnest? Sometimes he flattered himself that it was scarcely too late even now; redoubled energy might redeem a sufficient portion of the wasted time, and he might still compound for a part of all that timely forethought and ceaseless determination might have gained him. At any rate the very experiment might be salutary. By way of feeling his way, for he dreaded the ridicule with which a *réformation manquée* would cover him, he withdrew himself one summer to an old schloss he rented in the Riesengebirge in Bohemia. He shot and fished and read—we may be sure he thought a very great deal. In wet days and odd hours, sometimes under the influence of violent exercise in the forests, often under the stimulus of the wine bottle, he threw off a work so quaint and vigorous, so eloquent and original, showing such varied knowledge of men and books, containing an analysis so nice of vice and virtue, feeling and passions, that it created a sensation almost amounting to a *furor* in spite of its blemishes of style and the evidences of reckless composition. It ran straight through half a score of editions, and was translated straightway into half as many languages. And Lawless had scarcely flung it into the Press, than he rushed back again to the world and the swine trough, completely satisfied that his experiment had failed. Nor did the success of his book change his opinion. He had satisfied himself that a quiet life was distraction to him, and study with a fixed purpose impossible. He never cared to avow the anonymous authorship, although he never denied it. In a month or two he plunged into society and dissipation with all the recklessness and avidity of fifteen years before. It was in the season after his summer in Bohemia, that he eloped with the lady of the bedchamber from Berlin and passed his sword through the injured husband afterwards. A spectre the more added to the many that were haunting him; and although the Graf did strike him in the face in the Corso at Rome in full carnival, and although everything afterwards was done according to the most rigid laws of honour, no one mourned for the unfortunate Prussian longer or more sincerely than the man who slew him.

Nothing seemed to prosper with Lawless after that—so he always said on the very rare occasions when, in talk with an intimate, he alluded to the most sinister incident of his career. After the duel and the elopement —the lady left him soon—Englishmen and Englishwomen, old acquaintances of his, began to look shy on him. Married potentates began to ask him to supper instead of dinner, and he used to be shown into palaces by the back staircase more often than by the front one. Then his old allies and patrons began to die out, and a new generation arose, who cared less for his company. Years and his worries had begun to touch him. He drank more than he used to do; and although his still vigorous constitution enabled him to carry his liquor discreetly, he had something of Falstaff's figure, with a good deal of Bardolph's nose. He had always liked good living, but now the somewhat sensual development of his chin said as much. He had lost the excellent appetite that used to break agreeably

the most melancholy days; he ate very regularly still, but he was seldom or ever hungry. Indigestion and dyspepsia nourished the blue devils; they visited him more frequently than ever, and seemed to have grown more malignant. Then his money embarrassments had become terrible. His wife had died, and left him entitled to 600*l.* per annum for life, neither more nor less. Had he been a free man, he might have existed on the money, with prudence. But as Satan claims his bond after a time in the old legends, so now the creditors who had given Lawless his swing for so long, at last became simultaneously clamorous everywhere. Had they been able to assign their debtor formally in bankruptcy, it might have given rise to some odd and intricate questions in international insolvent law. But Lawless took excellent care not to risk himself where the danger was imminent. As Richard Swiveller sealed one street with a pair of gloves and another with a dinner, until at length it seemed likely he would have to leave town to go along the Strand, so Lawless could only zig-zag about Europe by the most fantastically circuitous détours. It was not surprising he fell out of many of his old friendships, when he found a many-headed Cerberus baying at him from every threshold where he used to be hospitably received. Perhaps pecuniary exhaustion and growing despondency were the twin causes of his settling in the first place at Les Sources. So we have seen migratory small birds drop in the rigging of a ship in mid-ocean, although they could scarcely have cared for their new company, and would gladly have pursued their flight, and followed the bent of their instinct, had strength and circumstances permitted.

Since the days when his decline might be said to have begun, we have only glanced at the incidents of Lawless's career. Were his memoirs to be published, or had his correspondence been preserved, it might have been divided roughly into a couple of periods. The first and earlier, brief *billets-doux* and briefer answers to off-hand invitations. The second, or later, protests, protocols, and petitions on urgent financial questions. His wife while she lived must have sent him, as we said, a good deal of money at one time or another. His sons, after she died, had to arrange more than once with pressing creditors, and made him at last a very moderate allowance, paid in minute sums, at frequent intervals. Yet, however he managed to come by it, money he generally had to the last, although he must often have been reduced to dire necessity. Did he beg it or borrow it, and if so, where? The mystery, possibly, will never be solved. But to the last, as we said, he indulged in high play at Les Sources, and he met his I.O.U.'s when the game had gone against him.

If remorse and regrets may be accepted for repentance—if there is any such thing as an earthly purgatory, where man may be purged, by suffering, of the sins and follies of one's earlier existence, Lawless's sojourn at Les Sources should have been very salutary to him. If ever mortal did penance where he sinned, and worked out expiation by it, surely he did. Dragging on towards the dishonoured grave he had always before his

eyes; longing for repose, and yet only doubting whether he should ever find it; with a constitution shattered like his hopes, and sensibilities morbidly sharpened by his sorrows; living the ghastly caricature of his former life; holding his old language from habit, and often thinking his old thoughts, yet thinking very differently when left to himself, and profoundly, as only a man could think who was gifted with his power of reflection; liked to the last by those who knew him the best, and shrinking all the time from a liking that must be akin to pity; dying deserted by all but a couple of men whose hearts he had won—a foreign doctor, who refused his fees, and a British official, who deferred his holiday to help him; the end of this brilliant, vicious, good-hearted, jolly old cosmopolitan, was the very symbol of his whole miserable life.

De Mortuis—Omnia.

Who does not remember the greediness of the Athenians for news? The love of gossip was one of their most striking characteristics, and "What news?" was as much part of the business of the Agora when friends met each other at noon, as the price of the freshest thunny or the condition of the flower-girl's violets. No event was too small for them to chronicle; no shifting of life's kaleidoscope too minute for them to follow; and it may also be added, few characters too high for them to respect by reticence, or too low for them to ignore by silence. Maid, matron, and hetaira; statesman and slave; the favourite poet's latest ode; the fashionable sophist's last oration; what blunder of uncouth simplicity the newest importation from Sparta had committed over night at the table of his luxurious entertainer; and how that fair-faced Bœotian in the Coan vest yonder, was spoiled so soon as she opened her pretty mouth and spoke; of all things under heaven and on earth so far as they knew them, and of some they did not know, they discoursed freely; discussing and dissecting without reticence, without stint, as no other people have done before or since. They were the lovers of gossip *par excellence*, and Athens was the paradise of all the newsmongers of the time; for neither dramatist nor orator could get a hearing if a witless fellow raised the cry; "News! news! news from the Hesperides; news from the Cassiterides; news of Glaucus; news of Phryne; who will hear my news?"

But even the Athenians had their limits and knew when to forbear. If they laughed out a babbling welcome to the winged Hermes carrying men's words and deeds as freight from land to land, they paid reverence to the Egyptian-born Harpocrates and respected the sign he made. The line of gossip must be drawn somewhere, if they would not be like their own harpies ravening and befouling all things; and they drew it at the door of the tomb. The dead were as sacred to them as the gods; Hades as impenetrable as Olympus. So much of latent delicacy underlaid this sunny old-world love of gossip, this chattering, laughing, light-minded delight in personal details. Yet the Athenians were "heathens" in the common language of our day; their civilisation was but a poor superficial kind of thing compared with our own, we say complacently, lifting our eyes from our statistics of crime and poverty; and their philosophy, their religion, stands nowhere side by side with our deeper sense of the obligations of morality, our keener vision of God, and what we know of the spiritual nature of man, hidden from them. Nevertheless the Athenians respected the memory of their dead; and we do not.

Their quality of human pity, of human honour, their sense of fairness even as man to man, came into play when there was none to reply; and the man who would not have scrupled to have lampooned his living friend, to have made him a butt for any number of damaging jests, and to have betrayed his secrets to inconvenient listeners, would have thought himself shamed and dishonoured for ever had he carried his treachery or his tattle beyond the grave—had he accused when defence was impossible, and betrayed when secure from revenge. The ghost wandering mournfully in the pale world of shadows had still susceptibilities and affections to be wounded by the poisoned arrows and insulted by coarse handling; and the tender fragrance of love, the nobler offering of honour, were assumed, not unreasonably, to be as much his due now when helpless and silent as when he walked self-protecting, face to face among his fellows, their equal if not their master.

Formerly, too, a certain faithfulness of obedience went hand in hand with this sacredness of silence as the only loyal method known of showing respect to the dead. His wishes were to be carried out as honourably as if he still had power to enforce them; just as his weaknesses were to be as lightly touched as if he was to be met half an hour hence at the next street corner to discuss with his biographer what had been said of him; and above all, the mysteries of his inner life, his private feelings, his secret sorrows, things which he himself had so jealously concealed, were to be religiously kept from the coarse gossip, the cold gaze of the world. No friend would have said of the dead he had loved and lived with, words which it would have been dishonourable to have said of the living; words, indeed, which he dared not have said of the living; for the same cause as that which makes it impossible for a high-minded gentleman to speak ill of the absent who cannot defend themselves. The very helplessness of the dead was their safeguard against indiscretion as against slander; and *de mortuis nil nisi bonum* only expressed the general respect for that helplessness.

We have changed all that old-time honour, all that bygone loyalty of reticence. We have gone in now for a coarse and cruel chatter we call euphemistically candour, but which is in reality nothing but love of scandal and of gossip carried to the highest point of indecency. Death, instead of drawing the veil closer and with more reverent protection round the memory of one's friend, is the signal for flinging it off as a rag which has fulfilled its uses; for opening all doors; prying into all corners; publishing every secret which, when living, the poor fellow had guarded with such anxious care; proclaiming broadly, positively, every vague and half-formed doubt; dissecting every sacred thought; tossing as a curiosity to the crowd to be bandied about from each to each, gaped at, wondered at by the callous and those who never grieved, every hidden sorrow; offering as a sacrifice to the Avengers, to be branded as a monstrosity, every ordinary human frailty, every small and common divergence from the straight and narrow path. Now it is the irrepressible interviewer who

lurks in the shadow of the sick chamber and photographs the details of the death-bed with revolting minuteness; now it is the private friend who turns into literary capital his former intimacy with the illustrious dead, and makes the whole world free of confidences given to him in trust. Between the hunters and the betrayers the security of the grave has gone; exhaled like the dew of the morning in the fierce glare of the noontide; and the sharpness of the sting of death is increased by the knowledge of what is to come after all else is over.

No sooner does a great man die than every miserable secret is made public property. The various stages of his disease are reported *in extenso*, and surgical and pathological facts flood the newspapers and magazines, which, had he foreseen their publication, would have added immeasurable anguish to his pain. His most careless as well as his most confidential letters are published crudely, as they were dashed off in a moment of unreflecting expansion; and fat heads wag exultingly over banalities which reconcile them to themselves and their own imbecility. Homer nods, and the asses bray. If he has committed what the world calls an indiscretion, the woman and her children are exhibited in the pages of the memorialist as one exhibits waxwork figures in a raree show; and the love which he had cherished in secret, and may be repented of in agony, is beaten out into so many paragraphs of prurient sensationalism, with more hinted at, says the chronicler, than it is safe or decent to detail. Had he an unfortunate attachment, where the course had run rough and not smooth, the world inherits the chronicle, and learns exactly the amount of disappointment he felt, and the length of time it took him to get over it; with speculations never coming to an end of what he would have been and how he would have risen had the fates been kind and Mary his. Had he an unjust suspicion of men, such as is often the accompaniment of an overworked brain and a diseased body, the expressions of his sick mood are scattered abroad, even though a better mind withdrew them before death, and there was a full and free reconciliation all round.

Rien n'est sacré pour un sapeur; and nothing is sacred to a biographer of that lower type where the instincts of the jackal and hyæna meet. His article is written in the tears and blood of his dead friend; but what of that? It gives him both *kudos* and money; and some of the glory of the illustrious deceased is reflected on him as the one who, by his own showing, stood nearest to the photosphere, and was most closely enveloped in its rays. In fact, some biographers make it appear that this glory is owing in reality in chief part to them; and that they were the real creators of the reputation which spread so far and rose so high. It was they who farmed out for the world's profit and put to their true uses powers which else would have lain buried in obscurity, like the talent wrapped in the napkin. If they did not positively create the genius which took the generation by storm or held it breathless in delight, which created a new era in literature, and opened a new pathway for science, for

statesmanship, for art, they at least educated, directed, coached, dug out, inspired. If they were not the acorn whence sprang the oak that raised its green glory so high to the heavens, yet they were the mould and the phosphates, the air and the light, by which it gained strength and vitality. Of what use is latent force without the motive power to set it going? Is it not the wheel which gives the diamond its artistic beauty as well as its current commercial value? and where would the island be without the coral insect at its roots? So they spread the varnish of Self over their pages; and what you read is not the real life of the man as he was in his own private identity, or as he appeared to the world at large, but the life of the man according to the asserted manipulation of his biographer—Charles as John made him, Charles as he was to John, Charles as he would have been without John, but most of all, John as he was to Charles, and as he wishes his dear friends and fellow-worshippers to know that he was. May not the slug be proud of the peach, and call the world to witness the splendour of the foothold he has made for himself?

If these are some of the penalties which the illustrious dead have to suffer at the hands of their friends, men who probably did honestly love them, only loving self more, and being men neither in whose character nor whose love exists the faintest line of delicacy, they fare still worse at those of their mere acquaintances. Crowds of these acquaintances start up like gnats in the evening round the grave, and claim as their beloved intimate him who lies dumb and powerless within it—him with whom when living they had never had more than the most passing, most superficial intercourse, and would never have been admitted to more. Fancy conversations spreading over all sorts of important topics are reported as having taken place between them—conversations of the gravest moment built on the slender foundation of a passing half-hour's chat; and the most sensitive and reticent of men—one who did not unbosom himself freely to even his dearest, and who always seemed to hold the key in reserve—is suddenly exhibited as a gushing babbler who gave his confidence unhesitatingly to a chance companion met at a fashionable dinner table, with neither claim nor merit for such distinction. You who were his friend of many years' standing, and whose relations to him were close and real, never heard him utter such an opinion, detail such a fact. Yet it seems to you that he would have surely told you before this would-be Teiresias spying-out the secret doings of the gods, this babbling traitor to the loyalty of trust. Still, you cannot give the lie of which you feel morally so sure, for you cannot prove your negative nor answer the demurrer:—"Is your ignorance to set the measure of my knowledge? If he chose to elect me his confidant rather than you, are you in your right to disclaim his confidences?" You are forced to stand by while the rivulet of untrustworthy revelations pours on, contenting yourself by saying simply:—"I do not believe it. It is unlike my friend, and altogether

out of harmony with his character. To me it is all manifestly false and made up."

You may say this privately, but you cannot prove it publicly; and even if you could, you would not be able to undo the harm already done. The world is too fond of the personal garbage of gossip to willingly relinquish any portion of which it may have got hold: and the coarsest daubs are accepted as life-like portraits by those who never saw the living face and are curious as to its features. It is far easier to create an impression than to undo it when once made, and a distortion need not be wilfully malicious to hurt for all time.

What pain this kind of rude publicity, this gross delineation, this false exaggeration gives those of the more reverent and loyal friends to whom the dead are as sacred as the living, it is impossible to describe. But every man or woman who has known and loved one renowned has to go through the same sad experience when the harpies of memoir and biography settle on the loved remains, and defile what they touch—when the blatant and self-seeking offer sweet sacrifice to themselves, making the dead their victim. But what do these care whether they pain the living or deface the dead? Fiction goes as far as fact in the manufacture of saleable copy, and shoddy is to be found in literature as well as in the loom. The thing cared for and worked for is gain; not the truth or the falsehood by which it is got; and, after all, are we so much worse than our neighbours? we say with indignant self-defence, when some chance Ithuriel pricks us and we are startled at the thing revealed. Do all so-called friendships ring true? are all the jewels offered for the acceptance of the credulous and unwary just as they are made to appear? Seeing that the living can rise up and denounce us if we offend them—can deny our claims to intimacy if made without warrant—can give the lie to our pretended confidences when they travel round to them again in that inevitable circle traced by Nemesis—can say "Depart, for I never knew you," when we go familiarly before them offering our hand—it is safest to take the dead as the foundation whereon to embroider our phantasy of memories. And to make ourselves safe is an instinct given to man for his good, and not to be despised by the grateful believer in Providence. The office of devil's advocate has never been vacant since it was first filled in the apple-tree; and the present generation is not the one to vote it a sinecure.

It seems to me that nothing can be in worse taste than all this wretched half-scandalous, half-indelicate gossip which is made public property so soon as a great man dies; nothing more substantially untrue than the so-called realistic method of giving undue prominence to petty personal frailties and foibles under the plea of candour and telling the whole truth. Just as a photograph where the light has been unskilfully managed is not like the person, because out of drawing and due relation, so the most absolutely exact facts may give a totally false impression because taken without the context and surroundings belonging to them.

No one's character can be subjected to this bald and cruel mapping-out by bits, and retain any sweetness, any harmony. It is not even anatomy; it is mutilation and distortion. But it is the fashion of the present day; and everyone who has a damaging fact, a dwarfing view, an inharmonious rendering to present of a great man lost to us, holds it as a duty he owes to truth and posterity to put it forward with as little delay and scant delicacy as possible—more especially if in putting it forward he drives himself to the front along with it—if, in adding a stone to the cairn, he engraves his own name in bold and showy letters on the one side, scrawling his friend's in wretched pin-pricks on the other. It is the fashion of the present day to extol Boswell without understanding him, and to justify a bad copy by the worth of the original.

As bad in its own way is that fulsome adulation which makes of the dead saints and heroes they never were in life—which praises a wry neck as a grace, and calls a fault by the name of a virtue because *he* possessed it and his name must be kept pure. The morbid sensibility which never rose to healthy self-respect, and was always ashamed of because dominated by circumstance—as if circumstance was greater than character, and the worth of a man's nature consists in what he has about him, and not in what he is—this morbid sensibility is to be praised as an excellent proof of surpassing delicacy. He who would blame it as the sign of that fatal want of moral robustness, that desperate need of masculine self-esteem and self-support by which men are ruined and their manhood betrayed, is scouted as a slanderer, or at best one of those coarse-minded hodmen of the race who know nothing of the lines and tracery of finer architecture. The faithlessness to obligations which galled, and to ties which wearied, was only an allowable exercise of free will in the man of genius who had to care first of all to keep that genius in good working condition, and who was not to be hampered by the petty moralities binding on meaner men. Where a grocer is a scoundrel if he neglects his children or does not pay his bills, a man who makes pretty rhymes and is called a poet, or who paints pretty pictures and is called an artist, may throw his on the chance charity of friends, and forget time and trade in dreams that are more rapturous than profitable. His adulatory biographer will show that his dreams were more to the purpose than another man's work; and that it was better for the world at large that he should give himself to his fancies than to honest methods of earning means whereby to live and pay his way. The grocer and the genius move in different planes of righteousness, and are to be judged by different standards of merit. There is no such thing as a moral absolute, according to the Boswells who pride themselves on the manner in which they carry figs to their patrons; and genius is as an alchemist who can turn base metal into gold and evolve living beauty out of calcined ashes. The common sense of mankind is against them; and virtue, and truth, and loyalty to one's word, and faithfulness to one's engagements—the truth of a man's heart and nature, in fact—are things more precious in

human history than the subtile brain apt at weaving delicate fancies if coupled with the selfish temper which acknowledged no God but self, and overrid every obligation so soon as it became embarrassing.

Thus, between the babblers and the flatterers, the biographers who mark with a broad arrow every secret fault and every private foible, and the adulators who present vices dressed up as virtues and require us to respect what is despicable and love what is abhorrent, the poor dumb dead come to bad passes in these days, and the art of the memoir writer is one which, for the most part, is a curse to the memory of the departed. Sometimes, indeed, we fall upon a delicately touched and subtilely suggestive bit of writing, wherein the author's own personality is suppressed, so that no literary or social capital is sought to be made out of the association, where nothing is told that ought to be concealed, nothing glossed over that ought to be condemned, and nothing kept back that the world has the right to know of one of its leaders and foremost citizens.

There are certain facts of a man's life which show his character, and reconcile much that else seems discordant; and others which have nothing of the quality of circumstance about them—which are mere facts self-contained, beginning and ending in themselves, and valuable only on the lowest grounds of gossip and scandal. The true biographer can judge between these two kinds, and the faithful friend knows by intuition which to reject and which to relate. The morality of the man who leaves his wife in favour of a newer love, and condemns because he injures her, is very different from the morality of him who leaves her for incompatibility of temper acknowledged on both sides, and who, though he finds solace in the future, forbears ever to speak bitterly of the past. And the action has to be spoken of differently. In the broad outlines both are the same; in essential qualities they are utterly unlike, and not to be ruled by the same measure. And this may stand as an illustration of more than itself, and of the tact as well as judgment required when dealing with the histories of men—the revelations that must needs be made, and the verdict, from passing which there is no way of escape for him who would be honest and at the same time reverent.

These green spots of love and tact and reverence and truth, all united in the biographical desert, are rare; and few hold the reputation of the dead to be as sacred as that of the living, or regard themselves as trustees of the delicacy they would not have ventured to offend face to face; few, again, standing on the other side of the way, think it needful to make of their hero a fallible man, and to show where the joints in his armour proved him vulnerable and mortal. It is all either the flushing of the sewers and the scraping of the roadway, so that not a fragment should be lost, or else it is running an artificial face of wax over the real features to conceal this homely trait and that unfavourable blemish—the presentation of a colourless ideal as devoid of life-likeness as of beauty. In any case there is vastly too much memoir writing as a rule, and too outrageous an amount of revelation and chatter about the dead. *Mors*

ultima linea rerum est. This was one of the old-time axioms, believed and accepted for the comfort of the wretched. With death came the end of all disaster, and no pursuing Fury could pass the dread portals of the tomb. Had they had the interviewer and memorialist, the man who received his friend at his own board and made private jottings of his sayings—who stored up in his memory what gifts he carried to him when the poor wretch lay sick, and how many journeys he and his made across the square to visit him—who noted his agonies, and gave the public a diagram of his sufferings—who made himself the one gigantic capital *I* in all that passed between them, and placed his "illustrious friend" as a pismire crawling humbly in the shadow thrown by that noble column across their joint track; had they known of flatterers and detractors, flinging, the one his sickly sweets, the other his bitter venom, and both their miserable personalities, into the sacred place of departed souls—they would not have applauded Horace when he wrote that line, and crystallised their simple faith in death as the end of all things. And had he, the poet himself, lived in the nineteenth century, and here, he too would have known that this death does not end all things for man, but that the day after is the one to be most feared; and that even a brave man may shudder when he contemplates the well-known *sequelæ* of his decease—a minute pathological description of his case in a medical journal, for one who was as modest as a maiden; a gossiping memoir in a magazine, when facts are scarce and length remunerative, for one who was reticent and not egotistical; a funeral sermon by a popular preacher, burking both facts and vices under one huge pitchplaster of praise, for him whose God had been himself and whose own will was his own law; maybe a statue in Leicester Square for one well versed in art and sensitive to beauty; or a "national memorial," whereof the committee come to loggerheads at first starting, and no one agrees to anything the other proposes, for the honour and glory of a man as meek as Moses and as shy as a nun.

E. L. L.

A Rose in June.

CHAPTER XIII.

HERE is no such picturesque incident in life as the sudden changes of fortune which make a complete revolution in the fate of families or individuals without either action or merit of their own. That which we are most familiar with is the change from comfort to poverty, which so often takes place, as it had done with the Damerels, when the head of a house, either incautious or unfortunate, goes out of this world leaving not only sorrow, but misery, behind him, and the bereavement is intensified by social downfall and all the trials that accompany loss of means. But for the prospect of Mr. Incledon's backing up, this would have implied a total change in the prospects and condition of the entire household, for all hope of higher education must have been given up for the boys; they must have dropped into any poor occupation which happened to be within their reach, with gratitude that they were able to maintain themselves; and as for the girls, what could they do, poor children, unless by some lucky chance of marriage? This poor hope would have given them one remaining chance not possible to their brothers; but, except that, what had they all to look forward to? This was Mrs. Damerel's excuse for urging Rose's unwilling consent to Mr. Incledon's proposal. But lo! all this was changed as by a magician's wand. The clouds rolled off the sky, the sunshine came out again, the family recovered its prospects, its hopes, its position, its freedom, and all this in a moment. Mrs. Damerel's old uncle Edward had been an original who had quarrelled with all his family. She had not seen him since she

SHE TOOK HER BAG IN HER HAND AND NOISELESSLY STOLE OUT.

was a child, and none of her children had seen him at all—and she never knew exactly what it was that made him select her for his heir. Probably it was pity; probably admiration for the brave stand she was making against poverty—perhaps only caprice, or because she had never asked anything from him; but, whatever the cause was, there was the happy result. In the evening anxiety, care, discouragement, bitter humiliation, and pain; in the morning sudden ease, comfort, happiness—for, in the absence of anything better, it is a great happiness to have money enough for all your needs, and to be able to give your children what they want, and pay your bills and owe no man anything. In the thought of being rich enough to do all this Mrs. Damerel's heart leapt up in her breast, like the heart of a child. Next moment she remembered, and with a pang of sudden anguish asked herself, oh, why—why had not this come sooner, when *he*, who would have enjoyed it so much, might have had the enjoyment? This feeling sprang up by instinct in her mind, notwithstanding her bitter consciousness of all she had suffered from her husband's carelessness and self-regard—for love is the strangest of all sentiments, and can indulge and condemn in a breath, without any sense of inconsistency. This was the pervading thought in Mrs. Damerel's mind as the news spread through the awakened house, making even the children giddy with hopes of they knew not what. How *he* would have enjoyed it all—the added luxury, the added consequence!—far more than she would enjoy it, notwithstanding that it came to her like life to the dying. She had taken no notice of Rose's exclamation, nor of the flush of joy which the girl betrayed. I am not sure, indeed, that she observed them, being absorbed in her own feelings, which come first even in the most generous minds, at such a crisis and revolution of fate.

As for Rose, it was the very giddiness of delight that she felt, unreasoning and even unfeeling. Her sacrifice had become unnecessary—she was free! So she thought, poor child, with a total indifference to honour and her word, which I do not attempt to excuse. She never once thought of her word, or of the engagement she had come under, or of the man who had been so kind to her, and loved her so faithfully. The children had holiday on that blessed morning, and Rose ran out with them into the garden, and ran wild with pure excess of joy. This was the first day that Mr. Nolan had visited them since he went to his new duties, and as the Curate came into the garden, somewhat tired after a long walk, and expecting to find his friends something as he had left them—if not mourning, yet subdued as true mourners continue after the sharpness of their grief is ended—he was struck with absolute dismay to meet Rose, flushed and joyous, with one of the children mounted on her shoulders, and pursued by the rest, in the highest of high romps, the spring air resounding with their shouts. Rose blushed a little when she saw him. She put down her little brother from her shoulder, and came forward beaming with happiness and kindness.

"Oh, how glad I am that you have come to-day," she said, and explained

forthwith all the circumstances with the frank diffuse explanatoriness of youth. "Now we are rich again; and oh, Mr. Nolan, I am so happy!" she cried, her soft eyes glowing with an excess of light which dazzled the Curate.

People who have never been rich themselves, and never have any chance of being rich, find it difficult sometimes to understand how others are affected in these unwonted circumstances. He was confounded by her frank rapture, the joy which seemed to him so much more than was necessary.

"I'm glad to see you so happy," he said, bewildered; "no doubt money's a blessing, and ye've felt the pinch, my poor child, or ye wouldn't be so full of your joy."

"Oh, Mr. Nolan, how I have felt it!" she said, her eyes filling with tears. A cloud fell over her face for the space of a moment, and then she laughed and cried out joyously, "but thank heaven that is all over now."

Mrs. Damerel was writing in the drawing-room, writing to her boys to tell them the wonderful news. Rose led the visitor in, pushing open the window which opened on the garden. "I have told him all about it, and how happy we are," she said, going up to her mother with all the confidence of happiness, and giving her, with unwonted demonstration, a kiss upon her forehead, before she danced out again to the sunny garden. Mrs. Damerel was a great deal more sober in her exultation, which relieved the Curate. She told him how it had all come about, and what a deliverance it was; then cried a little, having full confidence in his sympathy, over that unremovable regret that it had not come sooner. "How happy it would have made him—and relieved all his anxiety about us," she said. Mr. Nolan made some inarticulate sound, which she took for assent; or, at least, which it pleased her to mistake for assent. In her present mood it was sweet to think that her husband had been anxious, and the Curate knew human nature too well to contradict her. And then she gave him a little history of the past three months during which he had been absent, and of Rose's engagement and all Mr. Incledon's good qualities. "He would have done anything for us," said Mrs. Damerel; "but oh, how glad I am we shall not want anything—only Rose's happiness, which in his hands is secure."

"Mr. Incledon?" said the Curate, with a little wonder in his voice. "Ah, and so that is it. I thought it couldn't be nothing but money that made the child so pleased."

"You thought she looked very happy?" said the mother, with a sudden fright.

"Happy! she looked like her name—nothing is so happy as that but the innocent creatures of God; and sure I did her injustice thinking 'twas the money," the Curate said, with mingled compunction and wonder; for the story altogether sounded very strange to him, and he could not but marvel at the thought that Mr. Incledon's love, once so evidently indifferent to her, should light such lamps of joy now in Rose's eyes.

Mrs. Damerel changed the subject abruptly. A mist of something like care came over her face. "I have had a great deal of trouble and much to think about since I saw you," she said; "but I must not enter upon that now that it is over. Tell me about yourself."

He shrugged his shoulders as he told her how little there was to tell. A new parish, with other poor folk much like those he had left, and other rich folk not far dissimilar—the one knowing as little about the other as the two classes generally do. "That is about all my life is ever likely to be," he said, with a half smile, "between the two, with no great hold on either. I miss Agatha, and Dick, and little Patty—and you to come and talk to most of all," he said, looking at her with an affectionate wistfulness which went to her heart. Not that Mr. Nolan was "in love" with Mrs. Damerel, as vulgar persons would say, laughing; but the loss of her house and society was a great loss to the middle-aged Curate, never likely to have a house of his own.

"We must make it up as much as we can by talking all day long now you are here," she said, with kind smiles; but the Curate, though he was fond of her, was quick to see that she avoided the subject of Mr. Incledon, and was ready to talk of anything rather than that; though, indeed, the first love and first proposed marriage in a family has generally an interest exceeding everything else to the young heroine's immediate friends.

They had the merriest dinner at two o'clock, according to the habit of their humility, with roast mutton, which was the only joint Mary Jane could not spoil; simple fare, which contented the Curate as well as a French chef could have done. He told them funny stories of his new people, at which the children shouted with laughter, and described the musical parties at the vicarage, and the solemn little dinners, and all the dreary entertainments of a small town. The White House had not heard so much innocent laughter, so many pleasant foolish jokes, for years—and I don't think that Rose had ever so distinguished herself in the domestic circle. She had been generally considered too old for fun among the children—too dignified, more on mamma's side—giving herself up to poetry and other such solemn occupations; but to-day the suppressed fountain burst forth. Even Mrs. Damerel did not escape the infection of that laughter which rang like silver bells. The deep mourning they all wore, the poor little rusty black frocks trimmed still with crape, perhaps reproached the laughter now and then; but fathers and mothers cannot expect to be mourned for a whole year, and, indeed, the Rector to these little ones at least had not been much more than a name.

"Rose," said Mrs. Damerel, when the meal was over, and they had returned into the drawing-room, "I think we had better arrange to go up to town one of these days to see about your things. I have been putting off, and putting off, on account of our poverty; but it is full time to think of your trousseau now."

Rose stood still as if she had been suddenly struck by some mortal blow. She looked at her mother with eyes opening wide, lips falling apart, and a

sudden deadly paleness coming over her face. From the fresh sweetness of that rose tint which had come back to her she became all at once ashy-grey, like an old woman. "My—what, mamma?" she faltered, putting her hands upon the table to support herself. "I—did not hear—what you said."

"You'll find me in the garden, ladies, when you want me," said the Curate, with a man's usual cowardice, "bolting," as he himself expressed it, through the open window.

Mrs. Damerel looked up from where she had seated herself at the table, and looked her daughter in the face.

"Your trousseau," she said, calmly, "what else should it be?"

Rose gave a great and sudden cry. "That's all over, mamma, all over, isn't it?" she said eagerly; then hastening round to her mother's side, fell on her knees by her chair, and caught her hand and arm, which she embraced and held close to her breast. "Mamma! speak to me—it's all over—all over! You said the sacrifices we made would be required no longer. It is not needed any more, and it's all over. Oh, say so, with your own lips, mamma!"

"Rose, are you mad?" said her mother, drawing away her hand; "rise up, and do not let me think my child is a fool. Over! is honour over, and the word you have pledged, and the engagement you have made?"

"Honour!" said Rose, with white lips; "but it was for you I did it, and you do not require it any more."

"Rose," cried Mrs. Damerel, "you will drive me distracted. I have often heard that women have no sense of honour, but I did not expect to see it proved in your person. Can you go and tell the man who loves you that you will not marry him because we are no longer beggars? He would have helped us when we were penniless—is that a reason for casting him off now?"

Rose let her mother's hand go, but she remained on her knees by the side of the chair, as if unable to move, looking up in Mrs. Damerel's face with eyes twice their usual size.

"Then am I to be none the better—none the better?" she cried piteously, "are they all to be saved, all rescued, except me?"

"Get up, Rose," said Mrs. Damerel impatiently, "and do not let me hear any more of this folly. Saved! from an excellent man who loves you a great deal better than you deserve—from a lot that a queen might envy—everything that is beautiful and pleasant and good! You are the most ungrateful girl alive, or you would not venture to speak so to me."

Rose did not make any answer. She did not rise, but kept still by her mother's side, as if paralysed. After a moment Mrs. Damerel, in angry impatience, turned from her and resumed her writing, and there the girl continued to kneel, making no movement, heart-stricken, turned into marble. At length, after an interval, she pulled timidly at her mother's dress, looking at her with eyes so full of entreaty, that they forced Mrs. Damerel, against her will, to turn round and meet that pathetic gaze.

"Mamma," she said, under her breath, her voice having failed her, "just one word—is there no hope for me, can you do nothing for me? Oh, have a little pity! You could do something if you would but try."

"Are you mad, child?" cried the mother again—"do something for you? What can I do? You promised to marry him of your own will; you were not forced to do it. You told me you liked him not so long ago. How does this change the matter, except to make you more fit to be his wife? Are you mad?"

"Perhaps," said Rose softly; "if being very miserable is being mad, then I am mad, as you say."

"But you were not very miserable yesterday; you were cheerful enough."

"Oh, mamma, then there was no hope," cried Rose, "I had to do it—there was no help; but now hope has come—and must every one share it, every one get deliverance, but me?"

"Rose," said Mrs. Damerel, "when you are Mr. Incledon's wife every one of these wild words will rise up in your mind and shame you. Why should you make yourself unhappy by constant discussions? you will be sorry enough after for all you have allowed yourself to say. You have promised Mr. Incledon to marry him, and you must marry him. If I had six times Uncle Edward's money it would still be a great match for you."

"Oh, what do I care for a great match!"

"But I do," said Mrs. Damerel, "and whether you care or not has nothing to do with it. You have pledged your word and your honour, and you cannot withdraw from them. Rose, your marriage is fixed for the end of July. We must have no more of this."

"Three months," she said, with a little convulsive shudder. She was thinking that perhaps even yet something might happen to save her in so long a time as three months.

"Not quite three months," said Mrs. Damerel, whose thoughts were running on the many things that had to be done in the interval. "Rose shake off this foolish repining, which is unworthy of you, and go out to good Mr. Nolan, who must be dull with only the children. Talk to him and amuse him till I am ready. I am going to take him up to Whitton to show him the house."

Rose went out without a word; she went and sat down in the little shady summer-house where Mr. Nolan had taken refuge from the sun and from the mirth of the children. He had already seen there was something wrong, and was prepared with his sympathy; whoever was the offender Mr. Nolan was sorry for that one; it was a way he had; his sympathies did not go so much with the immaculate and always virtuous; but he was sorry for whosoever had erred or strayed, and was repenting of the same. Poor Rose—he began to feel himself Rose's champion, because he felt sure that it was Rose, young, thoughtless, and inconsiderate, who must be in the wrong. Rose sat down by his side with a heart-

broken look in her face, but did not say anything. She began to beat with her fingers on the table as if she were beating time to a march. She was still such a child to him, so young, so much like what he remembered her in pinafores that his heart ached for her. "You are in some little bit of trouble?" he said at last.

"Oh, not a little bit," cried Rose, "a great, very great trouble!" She was so full of it that she could not talk of anything else. And the feeling in her mind was that she must speak or die. She began to tell her story in the woody arbour with the gay noise of the children close at hand, but hearing a cry among them that Mr. Incledon was coming, started up and tied on her hat, and seizing Mr. Nolan's arm, dragged him out by the garden door. "I cannot see him to-day!" she cried, and led the Curate away, dragging him after her to a quiet byway over the fields in which she thought they would be safe. Rose had no doubt whatever of the full sympathy of this old friend. She was not afraid even of his disapproval. It seemed certain to her that he must pity at least if not help. And to Rose, in her youthful confidence in others, there was nothing in this world which was unalterable of its nature; no trouble, except death, which could not be got rid of by the intervention of friends.

It chilled her a little, however, as she went on, to see the Curate's face grow longer and longer, graver and graver. "You should not have done it," he said, shaking his head, when Rose told him how she had been brought to give her consent.

"I know I ought not to have done it, but it was not my doing. How could I help myself? And now, oh now, dear Mr. Nolan, tell me what to do! Will *you* speak to mamma? Though she will not listen to me she might hear you."

"But I don't see what your mamma has to do with it," said the Curate. "It is not to her you are engaged—nor is it she who has given her word; you must keep your word, we are all bound to do that."

"But a great many people don't do it," said Rose, driven to the worst of arguments in sheer despair of her cause.

"*You* must," said Mr. Nolan. "The people who don't are not people to be followed. You have bound yourself and you must stand by it. He is a good man and you must make the best of it. To a great many it would not seem hard at all. You have accepted him, and you must stand by him. I do not see what else can be done now."

"Oh, Mr. Nolan, you speak as if I were married, and there was no hope."

"It is very much the same thing," said the Curate; "you have given your word. Rose, you would not like to be a jilt; you must either keep your word or be called a jilt—and called truly. It is not a pleasant character to have."

"But it would not be true!"

"I think it would be true. Mr. Incledon, poor man, would have good reason to think so. Let us look at it seriously, Rose. What is

there so very bad in it that you should do a good man such an injury? He is not old. He is very agreeable and very rich. He would make you a great lady, Rose."

"Mr. Nolan, do you think I care for that?"

"A great many people care for it, and so do all who belong to you. Your poor father wished it. It had gone out of my mind, but I can recollect very well now; and your mother wishes it—and for you it would be a great thing, you don't know how great. Rose, you must try to put all this reluctance out of your mind, and think only of how many advantages it has."

"I care nothing for the advantages," said Rose, "the only one thing was for the sake of the others. He promised to be good to the boys and to help mamma; and now we don't need his help any more."

"A good reason, an admirable reason," cried the Curate with unwonted sarcasm, "for casting him off now. Few people state it so frankly, but it is the way of the world."

Rose gave him a look so full of wondering that the good man's heart was touched. "Come," he said, "you had made up your mind to it yesterday. It cannot be so very bad after all. At your age nothing can be very bad, for you can always adapt yourself to what is new. So long as there's nobody else in the way that's more to your mind," he said, turning upon her with a penetrating glance.

Rose said nothing in reply. She put up her hands to her face, covering it, and choking the cry which came to her lips. How could she to a man, to one so far separated from love and youth as was Mr. Nolan, make this last confession of all?

The Curate went away that night with a painful impression on his mind. He did not go to Whitton, as Mrs. Damerel had promised, to see Rose's future home, but he saw the master of it, who, disappointed by the headache with which Rose had retreated to her room, on her return from her walk with the Curate, did not show in his best aspect. None of the party indeed did; perhaps the excitement and commotion of the news had produced a bad result—for nothing could be flatter or more deadly-lively than the evening which followed. Even the children were cross and peevish and had to be sent to bed in disgrace; and Rose had hidden herself in her room, and lines of care and irritation were on Mrs. Damerel's forehead. The great good fortune which had befallen them did not, for the moment at least, bring happiness in its train.

CHAPTER XIV.

Rose did not go downstairs that night. She had a headache, which is the prescriptive right of a woman in trouble. She took the cup of tea which Agatha brought her, at the door of her room, and begged that

mamma would not trouble to come to see her, as she was going to bed. She was afraid of another discussion, and shrank even from seeing anyone. She had passed through a great many different moods of mind in respect to Mr. Incledon, but this one was different from all the rest. All the softening of feeling of which she had been conscious died out of her mind; his very name became intolerable to her. That which she had proposed to do, as the last sacrifice a girl could make for her family, an absolute renunciation of self and voluntary martyrdom for them, changed its character altogether when they no longer required it. Why should she do what was worse than death, when the object for which she was willing to die was no longer before her; when there was, indeed, no need for doing it at all? Would Iphigenia have died for her word's sake, had there been no need for her sacrifice? and why should Rose do more than she? In this there was, the reader will perceive, a certain change of sentiment; for though Rose had made up her mind sadly and reluctantly to marry Mr. Incledon, yet she had not thought the alternative worse than death. She had felt while she did it the ennobling sense of having given up her own will to make others happy, and had even recognised the far-off and faint possibility that the happiness which she thus gave to others might, some time or other, rebound upon herself. But the moment her great inducement was removed, a flood of different sentiment came in. She began to hate Mr. Incledon, to feel that he had taken advantage of her circumstances, that her mother had taken advantage of her, that everyone had used her as a tool to promote their own purpose, with no more consideration for her than had she been altogether without feeling. This thought went through her mind like a hot breath from a furnace, searing and scorching everything. And now that their purpose was served without her, she must still make this sacrifice—for honour! For honour! Perhaps it is true that women hold this motive more lightly than men, though indeed the honour that is involved in a promise of marriage does not seem to influence either sex very deeply in ordinary cases. I am afraid poor Rose did not feel its weight at all. She might be forced to keep her word, but her whole soul revolted against it. She had ceased to be sad and resigned. She was rebellious and indignant, and a hundred wild schemes and notions began to flit through her mind. To jump in such a crisis as this from the tender resignation of a martyr for love into the bitter and painful resistance of a domestic rebel who feels that no one loves her, is easy to the young mind in the unreality which more or less envelopes everything to youth. From the one to the other was but a step. Yesterday she had been the centre of all the family plans, the foundation of comfort, the chief object of their thoughts. Now she was in reality only Rose the eldest daughter, who was about to make a brilliant marriage, and therefore was much in the foreground, but no more loved or noticed than anyone else. In reality this change had actually come, but she imagined a still greater change; and fancy showed her to herself as the rebellious daughter, the one who had never fully done her duty, never been quite in sym-

pathy with her mother, and whom all would be glad to get rid of, in marriage or any other way, as interfering with the harmony of the house. Such of us as have been young may remember how easy these revolutions of feeling were, and with what quick facility we could identify ourselves as almost adored or almost hated, as the foremost object of everybody's regard or an intruder in everybody's way. Rose passed a very miserable night, and the next day was, I think, more miserable still. Mrs. Damerel did not say a word to her on the subject which filled her thoughts, but told her that she had decided to go to London in the beginning of the next week, to look after the "things" which were necessary. As they were in mourning already, there was no more trouble of that description necessary on Uncle Edward's account, but only new congratulations to receive, which poured in on every side.

"I need not go through the form of condoling, for I know you did not have much intercourse with him, poor old gentleman," one lady said; and another caught Rose by both hands and exclaimed on the good luck of the family in general.

"Blessings, like troubles, never come alone," she said. "To think you should have a fortune tumbling down upon you on one side, and on the other this chit of a girl carrying off the best match in the county!"

"I hope we are sufficiently grateful for all the good things Providence sends us," said Mrs. Damerel, fixing her eyes severely upon Rose.

Oh, if she had but had the courage to take up the glove thus thrown down to her! But she was not yet screwed up to that desperate pitch.

Mr. Incledon came later, and in his joy at seeing her was more lover-like than he had yet permitted himself to be.

"Why I have not seen you since this good news came!" he cried, fondly kissing her in his delight and heartiness of congratulation, a thing he had never done before. Rose broke from him and rushed out of the room, white with fright and resentment.

"Oh, how dared he! how dared he!" she cried, rubbing the spot upon her cheek which his lips had touched with wild exaggeration of dismay.

And how angry Mrs. Damerel was! She went upstairs after the girl, and spoke to her as Rose had never yet been spoken to in all her soft life—upbraiding her with her heartlessness, her disregard of other people's feelings, her indifference to her own honour and plighted word. Once more Rose remained upstairs, refusing to come down, and the house was aghast at the first quarrel which had ever disturbed its decorum.

Mr. Incledon went away bewildered and unhappy, not knowing whether to believe that this was a mere ebullition of temper, such as Rose had never shown before, which would have been a venial offence, rather amusing than otherwise to his indulgent fondness; or whether it meant something more, some surging upwards of the old reluctance to accept him, which he had believed himself to have overcome. This doubt chilled him to the heart, and gave him much to think of as he took his somewhat dreary walk

home—for failure, after there has been an appearance of success, is more discouraging still than when there has been no opening at all in the clouded skies. And Agatha knocked at Rose's locked door, and bade her good-night through the keyhole with a mixture of horror and respect—horror for the wickedness, yet veneration for the courage which could venture thus to beard all constituted authorities. Mrs. Damerel herself said no good-night to the rebel. She passed Rose's door steadily without allowing herself to be led away by the impulse which tugged at her heart to go in and give the kiss of grace, notwithstanding the impenitent condition of the offender. Had the mother done this, I think all that followed might have been averted, and that Mrs. Damerel would have been able eventually to carry out her programme and arrange the girl's life as she wished. But she thought it right to show her displeasure, though her heart almost failed her.

Rose had shut herself up in wild misery and passion. She had declared to herself that she wanted to see no one; that she would not open her door, nor subject herself over again to such reproaches as had been poured upon her. But yet when she heard her mother pass without even a word, all the springs of the girl's being seemed to stand still. She could not believe it. Never before in all her life had such a terrible occurrence taken place. Last night, when she had gone to bed to escape remark, Mrs. Damerel had come in ere she went to her own room and asked after the pretended headache, and kissed her, and bade her keep quite still and be better to-morrow. Rose got up from where she was sitting, expecting her mother's appeal and intending to resist, and went to the door and put her ear against it and listened. All was quiet. Mrs. Damerel had gone steadily along the corridor, had entered the rooms of the other children, and now shut her own door—sure signal that the day was over. When this inexorable sound met her ears, Rose crept back again to her seat and wept bitterly, with an aching and vacancy in her heart which it is beyond words to tell. It seemed to her that she was abandoned, cut off from the family love, thrown aside like a waif and stray, and that things would never be again as they had been. This terrible conclusion always comes in to aggravate the miseries of girls and boys. Things could never mend, never again be as they had been. She cried till she exhausted herself, till her head ached in dire reality, and she was sick and faint with misery and the sense of desolation; and then wild schemes and fancies came into her mind. She could not bear it—scarcely for those dark helpless hours of the night could she bear it—but must be still till daylight; then, poor forlorn child, cast off by everyone, abandoned even by her mother, with no hope before her but this marriage, which she hated, and no prospect but wretchedness—then she made up her mind she would go away. She took out her little purse and found a few shillings in it, sufficient to carry her to the refuge which she had suddenly thought of. I think she would have liked to fly out of sight and ken and hide herself for ever, or at least until all who had been unkind to

her had broken their hearts about her, as she had read in novels of unhappy heroines doing. But she was too timid to take such a daring step, and she had no money, except the ten shillings in her poor little pretty purse, which was not meant to hold much. When she had made up her mind, as she thought, or to speak more truly, when she had been quite taken possession of by this wild purpose, she put a few necessaries into a bag to be ready for her flight, taking her little prayer-book last of all, which she kissed and cried over with a heart wrung with many pangs. Her father had given it her on the day she was nineteen—not a year since. Ah, why was not she with him, who always understood her, or why was not he here? He would never have driven her to such a step as this. He was kind, whatever anyone might say of him. If he neglected some things, he was never hard upon anyone—at least, never hard upon Rose—and he would have understood her now. With an anguish of sudden sorrow, mingled with all the previous misery in her heart, she kissed the little book and put it into her bag. Poor child! it was well for her that her imagination had that sad asylum at least to take refuge in, and that the Rector had not lived long enough to show how hard in worldliness a soft and self-indulgent man can be.

Rose did not go to bed. She had a short, uneasy sleep, against her will, in her chair—dropping into constrained and feverish slumber for an hour or so in the dead of the night. When she woke the dawn was blue in the window, making the branches of the honeysuckle visible through the narrow panes. There was no sound in heaven or earth except the birds chirping, but the world seemed full of that; for all the domestic chat has to be got over in all the nests before men awake and drown the delicious babble in harsher commotions of their own. Rose got up and bathed her pale face and red eyes, and put on her hat. She was cold, and glad to draw a shawl round her and get some consolation and strength from its warmth; and then she took her bag in her hand, and opening her door, noiselessly stole out. There was a very early train which passed the Dingle station, two miles from Dinglefield, at about five o'clock, on its way to London; and Rose hoped, by being in time for that, to escape all pursuit. How strange it was going out like a thief into the house, all still and shut up, with its windows closely barred, the shutters up, and a still, unnatural half-light gleaming in through the crevices! As she stole downstairs her very breathing, the sound of her own steps, frightened Rose; and when she looked in at the open door of the drawing-room and saw all the traces of last night's peaceful occupations, a strange feeling that all the rest were dead and she a fugitive stealing guiltily away, came on her so strongly that she could scarcely convince herself it was not true. It was like the half-light that had been in all the rooms when her father lay dead in the house, and made her shiver. Feeling more and more like a thief, she opened the fastenings of the hall door, which were rusty and gave her some trouble. It was difficult to open them, still more difficult to close

it softly without alarming the house; and this occupied her mind, so that she made the last step almost without thinking what she was doing. When she had succeeded in shutting the door, then it suddenly flashed upon her, rushed upon her like a flood—the consciousness of what she had done. She had left home, and all help and love and protection; and—heaven help her—here she was out of doors in the open-eyed day, which looked at her with a severe, pale calm—desolate and alone! She held by the pillars of the porch to support her for one dizzy, bewildered moment; but now was not the time to break down or let her terrors, her feelings overcome her. She had taken the decisive step and must go on now.

Mrs. Damerel, disturbed perhaps by the sound of the closing door, though she did not make out what it was, got up and looked out from the window in the early morning, and, at the end of the road which led to the Green, saw a solitary figure walking, which reminded her of Rose. She had half-forgotten Rose's perverseness, in her sleep, and I think the first thing that came into her mind had been rather the great deliverance sent to her in the shape of Uncle Edward's fortune, than the naughtiness—though it was almost too serious to be called naughtiness—of her child. And though it struck her for the moment with some surprise to see the slim young figure on the road so early, and a passing notion crossed her mind that something in the walk and outline was like Rose, yet it never occurred to her to connect that unusual appearance with her daughter. She lay down again when she had opened the window with a little half-wish, half-prayer that Rose might "come to her senses" speedily. It was too early to get up, and though Mrs. Damerel could not sleep, she had plenty to think about, and this morning leisure was the best time for it. Rose prevailed largely among her subjects of thought, but did not fill her whole mind. She had so many other children, and so much to consider about them all!

Meanwhile Rose went on to the station, like a creature in a dream, feeling the very trees, the very birds watch her, and wondering that no faces peeped at her from the curtained cottage windows. How strange to think that all the people were asleep, while she walked along through the dreamy world, her footsteps filling it with strange echoes! How fast and soundly it slept, that world, though all the things out-of-doors were in full movement, interchanging their opinions, and taking council upon all their affairs! She had never been out, and had not very often been awake, at such an early hour, and the stillness from all human sounds and voices, combined with the wonderful fullness of the language of Nature, gave her a strange bewildered feeling, like that a traveller might have in some strange star or planet peopled with beings different from man. It seemed as if all the human inhabitants had resigned, and given up their places to another species. The fresh air which blew in her face, and the cheerful stir of the birds, recovered her a little from the fright with which she felt herself alone in that changed universe—and the

sight of the first wayfarer making his way, like herself, towards the station, gave her a thrill of pain, reminding her that she was neither walking in a dream nor in another planet, but on the old-fashioned earth, dominated by men, and where she shrank from being seen or recognised. She put her veil down over her face as she stole in, once more feeling like a thief, at the wooden gate. Two or three people only, all of the working class, were kicking their heels on the little platform. Rose took her ticket with much trepidation, and stole into the quietest corner to await the arrival of the train. It came up at last with a great commotion, the one porter rushing to open the door of a carriage, out of which Rose perceived quickly, a gentleman jumped, giving directions about some luggage. An arrival was a very rare event at so early an hour in the morning. Rose went forward timidly with her veil over her face to creep into the carriage which this traveller had vacated, and which seemed the only empty one. She had not looked at him, nor had she any curiosity about him. The porter, busy with the luggage, paid no attention to her, for which she was thankful, and she thought she was getting away quite unobserved, which gave her a little comfort. She had her foot on the step, and her hand on the carriage door, to get in.

"Miss Damerel!" cried an astonished voice close by her ear.

Rose's foot failed on the step. She almost fell with the start she gave. Whose voice was it? a voice she knew—a voice somehow that went to her heart; but in the first shock she did not ask herself any questions about it, but felt only the distress and terror of being recognised. Then she decided that it was her best policy to steal into the carriage to escape questions. She did so, trembling with fright; but as she sat down in the corner, turned her face unwittingly towards the person, whoever it was, who had recognised her. He had left his luggage, and was gazing at her with his hand on the door. His face, all flushed with delight, gleamed upon her like sudden sunshine. "Miss Damerel!" he cried again, "you here at this hour?"

"Oh, hush! hush!" she cried, putting up her hand with instinctive warning. "I—don't want to be seen."

I am not sure that she knew him at the first glance. Poor child, her heart was too deeply pre-occupied to do more than flutter feebly at the sight of him, and no secondary thought as to how he had come here, or what unlooked-for circumstance had brought him back, was within the range of her intelligence. Edward Wodehouse made no more than a momentary pause ere he decided what to do. He slipped a coin into the porter's ready hand, and gave him directions about his luggage. "Keep it safe till I return; don't send it home. I am obliged to go to town for an hour or two," he said, and sprang again into the carriage he had just left. His heart was beating with no feeble flutter. He had the promptitude of a man who knows that no opportunity ought to be neglected. The door closed upon them with that familiar bang which we all know so well; the engine shrieked, the wheels jarred, and Rose Damerel and

Edward Wodehouse—two people whom even the Imperial Government of England had been moved to separate—moved away into the distance, as if they had eloped with each other, sitting face to face.

Her heart fluttered feebly enough — his heart as strong as the pulsations of the steam-engine, and he thought almost as audible; but the first moment was one of embarrassment. "I cannot get over the wonder of this meeting," he said. "Miss Damerel, what happy chance takes you to London this morning of all others? Some fairy must have done it for me?"

"No happy chance at all," said Rose, shivering with painful emotion, and drawing her shawl closer round her. What could she say to him?—but she began to realise that it was *him*, which was the strangest bewildering sensation. As for him, knowing of no mystery and no misery, the tender sympathy in his face grew deeper and deeper. Could it be poverty? could she be going to work like any other poor girl? A great throb of love and pity went through the young man's heart.

"Don't be angry with me," he said; "but I cannot see you here, alone and looking sad — and take no interest. Can you tell me what it is? Can you make any use of me? Miss Damerel, don't you know there is nothing in the world that would make me so happy as to be of service to you?"

"Have you just come home?" she asked.

"This morning; I was on my way from Portsmouth. And you—won't you tell me something about yourself?"

Rose made a tremendous effort to go back to the ordinary regions of talk; and then she recollected all that had happened since he had been away. "You know that papa died," she said, the tears springing to her eyes with an effort of nature which relieved her brain and heart.

"I heard that: I was very, very sorry."

"And then for a time we were very poor; but now we are well off again by the death of mamma's uncle Edward; that is all, I think," she said, with an attempt at a smile.

Then there was a pause. How was he to subject her to a cross-examination? and yet Edward felt that, unless something had gone very wrong, the girl would not have been here.

"You are going to town?" he said. "It is very early for you; and alone?——"

"I do not mind," said Rose; and then she added quickly, "When you go back, will you please not say you have seen me? I don't want any one to know."

"Miss Damerel, something has happened to make you unhappy?"

"Yes," she said, "but never mind. It does not matter much to any one but me. Your mother is very well. Did she know that you were coming home?"

"No, it is quite sudden. I am promoted by the help of some kind

unknown friend or another, and they could not refuse me a few days leave ——."

"Mrs. Wodehouse will be very glad," said Rose. She seemed to rouse out of her preoccupation to speak to him, and then fell back. The young sailor was at his wits end. What a strange coming home it was to him! He had dreamt of his first meeting with Rose in a hundred different ways, and rehearsed it, and all that he would say to her; but such a wonderful meeting as this had never occurred to him; and to have her entirely to himself, yet not to know what to say!

"There must be changes since I left. It will soon be a year ago," he said, in sheer despair.

"I do not remember any changes," said Rose, "except the rectory. We are in the White House now. Nothing else has happened that I know—yet."

This little word made his blood run cold—*yet*. Did it mean that something was about to happen? He tried to overcome that impression by a return to the ground he was sure of. "May I speak of last year?" he said. "I went away very wretched—as wretched as any man could be."

Rose was too far gone to think of the precautions with which such a conversation ought to be conducted. She knew what he meant, and why should she pretend she did not? Not that this reflection passed through her mind, which acted totally upon impulse, without any reflection at all.

"It was not my fault," she said, simply. "I was alone with papa, and he would not let me go."

"Ah!" he said, his eyes lighting up; "you did not think me presumptuous, then? you did not mean to crush me? Oh! if you knew how I have thought of it, and questioned myself! It has never been out of my mind for a day—for an hour——"

She put up her hand hastily. "I may be doing wrong," she said, "but it would be more wrong still to let you speak. They would think it was for this I came away."

"What is it? what is it?" he said; "something has happened. Why may not I tell you, when I have at last this blessed opportunity? Why is it wrong to let me speak?"

"They will think it was for this I came away," said Rose. "Oh! Mr. Wodehouse, you should not have come with me. They will say I knew you were to be here. Even mamma, perhaps, will think so, for she does not think well of me, as papa used to do. She thinks I am selfish, and care only for my own pleasure," said Rose with tears.

"You have come away without her knowledge?"

"Yes."

"Then you are escaping from some one?" said Wodehouse, his face flushing over.

"Yes! yes."

"Miss Damerel, come back with me. Nobody, I am sure, will force

mamma would not trouble to come to see her, as she was going to bed. She was afraid of another discussion, and shrank even from seeing anyone. She had passed through a great many different moods of mind in respect to Mr. Incledon, but this one was different from all the rest. All the softening of feeling of which she had been conscious died out of her mind; his very name became intolerable to her. That which she had proposed to do, as the last sacrifice a girl could make for her family, an absolute renunciation of self and voluntary martyrdom for them, changed its character altogether when they no longer required it. Why should she do what was worse than death, when the object for which she was willing to die was no longer before her; when there was, indeed, no need for doing it at all? Would Iphigenia have died for her word's sake, had there been no need for her sacrifice? and why should Rose do more than she? In this there was, the reader will perceive, a certain change of sentiment; for though Rose had made up her mind sadly and reluctantly to marry Mr. Incledon, yet she had not thought the alternative worse than death. She had felt while she did it the ennobling sense of having given up her own will to make others happy, and had even recognised the far-off and faint possibility that the happiness which she thus gave to others might, some time or other, rebound upon herself. But the moment her great inducement was removed, a flood of different sentiment came in. She began to hate Mr. Incledon, to feel that he had taken advantage of her circumstances, that her mother had taken advantage of her, that everyone had used her as a tool to promote their own purpose, with no more consideration for her than had she been altogether without feeling. This thought went through her mind like a hot breath from a furnace, searing and scorching everything. And now that their purpose was served without her, she must still make this sacrifice—for honour! For honour! Perhaps it is true that women hold this motive more lightly than men, though indeed the honour that is involved in a promise of marriage does not seem to influence either sex very deeply in ordinary cases. I am afraid poor Rose did not feel its weight at all. She might be forced to keep her word, but her whole soul revolted against it. She had ceased to be sad and resigned. She was rebellious and indignant, and a hundred wild schemes and notions began to flit through her mind. To jump in such a crisis as this from the tender resignation of a martyr for love into the bitter and painful resistance of a domestic rebel who feels that no one loves her, is easy to the young mind in the unreality which more or less envelopes everything to youth. From the one to the other was but a step. Yesterday she had been the centre of all the family plans, the foundation of comfort, the chief object of their thoughts. Now she was in reality only Rose the eldest daughter, who was about to make a brilliant marriage, and therefore was much in the foreground, but no more loved or noticed than anyone else. In reality this change had actually come, but she imagined a still greater change; and fancy showed her to herself as the rebellious daughter, the one who had never fully done her duty, never been quite in sym-

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"I need not go through the form of condoling, for I know you did not have much intercourse with him, poor old gentleman," one lady said; and another caught Rose by both hands and exclaimed on the good luck of the family in general.

"Blessings, like troubles, never come alone," she said. "To think you should have a fortune tumbling down upon you on one side, and on the other this chit of a girl carrying off the best match in the county!"

"I hope we are sufficiently grateful for all the good things Providence sends us," said Mrs. Damerel, fixing her eyes severely upon Rose.

Oh, if she had but had the courage to take up the glove thus thrown down to her! But she was not yet screwed up to that desperate pitch.

Mr. Incledon came later, and in his joy at seeing her was more lover-like than he had yet permitted himself to be.

"Why I have not seen you since this good news came!" he cried, fondly kissing her in his delight and heartiness of congratulation, a thing he had never done before. Rose broke from him and rushed out of the room, white with fright and resentment.

"Oh, how dared he! how dared he!" she cried, rubbing the spot upon her cheek which his lips had touched with wild exaggeration of dismay.

And how angry Mrs. Damerel was! She went upstairs after the girl, and spoke to her as Rose had never yet been spoken to in all her soft life—upbraiding her with her heartlessness, her disregard of other people's feelings, her indifference to her own honour and plighted word. Once more Rose remained upstairs, refusing to come down, and the house was aghast at the first quarrel which had ever disturbed its decorum.

Mr. Incledon went away bewildered and unhappy, not knowing whether to believe that this was a mere ebullition of temper, such as Rose had never shown before, which would have been a venial offence, rather amusing than otherwise to his indulgent fondness; or whether it meant something more, some surging upwards of the old reluctance to accept him, which he had believed himself to have overcome. This doubt chilled him to the heart, and gave him much to think of as he took his somewhat dreary walk

home—for failure, after there has been an appearance of success, is more discouraging still than when there has been no opening at all in the clouded skies. And Agatha knocked at Rose's locked door, and bade her good-night through the keyhole with a mixture of horror and respect—horror for the wickedness, yet veneration for the courage which could venture thus to beard all constituted authorities. Mrs. Damerel herself said no good-night to the rebel. She passed Rose's door steadily without allowing herself to be led away by the impulse which tugged at her heart to go in and give the kiss of grace, notwithstanding the impenitent condition of the offender. Had the mother done this, I think all that followed might have been averted, and that Mrs. Damerel would have been able eventually to carry out her programme and arrange the girl's life as she wished. But she thought it right to show her displeasure, though her heart almost failed her.

Rose had shut herself up in wild misery and passion. She had declared to herself that she wanted to see no one; that she would not open her door, nor subject herself over again to such reproaches as had been poured upon her. But yet when she heard her mother pass without even a word, all the springs of the girl's being seemed to stand still. She could not believe it. Never before in all her life had such a terrible occurrence taken place. Last night, when she had gone to bed to escape remark, Mrs. Damerel had come in ere she went to her own room and asked after the pretended headache, and kissed her, and bade her keep quite still and be better to-morrow. Rose got up from where she was sitting, expecting her mother's appeal and intending to resist, and went to the door and put her ear against it and listened. All was quiet. Mrs. Damerel had gone steadily along the corridor, had entered the rooms of the other children, and now shut her own door—sure signal that the day was over. When this inexorable sound met her ears, Rose crept back again to her seat and wept bitterly, with an aching and vacancy in her heart which it is beyond words to tell. It seemed to her that she was abandoned, cut off from the family love, thrown aside like a waif and stray, and that things would never be again as they had been. This terrible conclusion always comes in to aggravate the miseries of girls and boys. Things could never mend, never again be as they had been. She cried till she exhausted herself, till her head ached in dire reality, and she was sick and faint with misery and the sense of desolation; and then wild schemes and fancies came into her mind. She could not bear it—scarcely for those dark helpless hours of the night could she bear it—but must be still till daylight; then, poor forlorn child, cast off by everyone, abandoned even by her mother, with no hope before her but this marriage, which she hated, and no prospect but wretchedness—then she made up her mind she would go away. She took out her little purse and found a few shillings in it, sufficient to carry her to the refuge which she had suddenly thought of. I think she would have liked to fly out of sight and ken and hide herself for ever, or at least until all who had been unkind to

her had broken their hearts about her, as she had read in novels of unhappy heroines doing. But she was too timid to take such a daring step, and she had no money, except the ten shillings in her poor little pretty purse, which was not meant to hold much. When she had made up her mind, as she thought, or to speak more truly, when she had been quite taken possession of by this wild purpose, she put a few necessaries into a bag to be ready for her flight, taking her little prayer-book last of all, which she kissed and cried over with a heart wrung with many pangs. Her father had given it her on the day she was nineteen—not a year since. Ah, why was not she with him, who always understood her, or why was not he here? He would never have driven her to such a step as this. He was kind, whatever anyone might say of him. If he neglected some things, he was never hard upon anyone—at least, never hard upon Rose—and he would have understood her now. With an anguish of sudden sorrow, mingled with all the previous misery in her heart, she kissed the little book and put it into her bag. Poor child! it was well for her that her imagination had that sad asylum at least to take refuge in, and that the Rector had not lived long enough to show how hard in worldliness a soft and self-indulgent man can be.

Rose did not go to bed. She had a short, uneasy sleep, against her will, in her chair—dropping into constrained and feverish slumber for an hour or so in the dead of the night. When she woke the dawn was blue in the window, making the branches of the honeysuckle visible through the narrow panes. There was no sound in heaven or earth except the birds chirping, but the world seemed full of that; for all the domestic chat has to be got over in all the nests before men awake and drown the delicious babble in harsher commotions of their own. Rose got up and bathed her pale face and red eyes, and put on her hat. She was cold, and glad to draw a shawl round her and get some consolation and strength from its warmth; and then she took her bag in her hand, and opening her door, noiselessly stole out. There was a very early train which passed the Dingle station, two miles from Dinglefield, at about five o'clock, on its way to London; and Rose hoped, by being in time for that, to escape all pursuit. How strange it was going out like a thief into the house, all still and shut up, with its windows closely barred, the shutters up, and a still, unnatural half-light gleaming in through the crevices! As she stole downstairs her very breathing, the sound of her own steps, frightened Rose; and when she looked in at the open door of the drawing-room and saw all the traces of last night's peaceful occupations, a strange feeling that all the rest were dead and she a fugitive stealing guiltily away, came on her so strongly that she could scarcely convince herself it was not true. It was like the half-light that had been in all the rooms when her father lay dead in the house, and made her shiver. Feeling more and more like a thief, she opened the fastenings of the hall door, which were rusty and gave her some trouble. It was difficult to open them, still more difficult to close

"You are very good," said Mrs. Damerel; "I am much obliged to you;" and then the two were silent for a moment, eyeing each other like wrestlers before they close.

"Mrs. Damerel," said young Wodehouse, faltering, and brave sailor as he was, feeling more frightened than he could have said, "there is something more which I ought to tell you. Meeting her so suddenly, and remembering how I had been balked in seeing her before I left Dinglefield, I was overcome by my feelings, and ventured to tell Miss Damerel——"

"Mr. Wodehouse, my daughter is engaged to be married!" cried Mrs. Damerel, with sharp and sudden alarm.

"But not altogether—with her own will," he said.

"You must be mistaken," said the mother, with a gasp for breath. "Rose is foolish, and changes with every wind that blows. She cannot have intended to leave any such impression on your mind. It is the result, I suppose, of some lovers' quarrel. As this is the case, I need not say that though, under any other circumstances, I should deeply have felt the honour you do her, yet, in the present, the only thing I can do is to say good morning and many thanks. Have you really not seen your mother yet?"

"Not yet. I am going——"

"Oh go, please, go!" said Mrs. Damerel. "It was extremely kind of you to bring the note before going home, but your mother would never forgive me if I detained you; good-bye. If you are here for a few days I may hope to see you before you go."

With these words she accompanied him to the door, smiling cordially as she dismissed him. He could neither protest against the dismissal nor linger in spite of it, to repeat the love-tale which she had stopped on his lips. Her apparent calm had almost deceived him, and but for a little quiver of her shadow upon the wall, a little clasping together of her hands, with Rose's letter in them, which nothing but the keenest observation could have detected, he could almost have believed in his bewilderment that Rose had been dreaming, and that her mother was quite cognizant of her flight, and knew where she was going and all about it. But, however that might be, he had to go, in a very painful maze of thought, not knowing what to think or to hope about Rose, and having a whimsical certainty of what must be awaiting him at home, had his mother heard, as was most likely, of his arrival, and that he had gone first to the White House. Fortunately for him, Mrs. Wodehouse had not heard it; but she poured into his reluctant ears the whole story of Mr. Incledon and the engagement, and of all the wonders with which he was filling Whitton in preparation for his bride.

"Though I think she treated you very badly, after encouraging you as she did, and leading you on to the very edge of a proposal—yet one can't but feel that she is a very lucky girl," said Mrs. Wodehouse. "I hope

you will take care not to throw yourself in their way, my dear; though, perhaps, on the whole, it would be best to show that you have got over it entirely and don't mind who she marries. A little insignificant chit of a girl not worth your notice. There are as good fish in the sea, Edward—or better, for that matter."

"Perhaps you are right, mother," he said, glad to escape from the subject; and then he told her the mystery of his sudden promotion, and how he had struggled to get this fortnight's leave before joining his ship, which was in commission for China. Mrs. Wodehouse fatigued her brain with efforts to discover who it could be who had thus mysteriously befriended her boy; and as this subject drew her mind from the other, Edward was thankful enough to listen to her suggestions of this man who was dead, and that man who was at the end of the world. He had not an idea himself who it could be, and, I think, cherished a furtive hope that it was his good service which had attracted the notice of my Lords; for young men are easily subject to this kind of illusion. But his mind, it may be supposed, was sufficiently disturbed without any question of the kind. He had to reconcile Rose's evident misery in her flight, with her mother's calm acceptance of it as a thing she knew of; and to draw a painful balance between Mrs. Damerel's power to insist and command, and Rose's power of resistance; finally, he had the despairing consciousness that his leave was only for a fortnight, a period too short for anything to be decided on. No hurried settlement of the extraordinary imbroglio of affairs which he perceived dimly—no licence, however special, would make it possible to secure Rose in a fortnight's time; and he was bound to China for three years! This reflection, you may well suppose, gave the young man enough to think of, and made his first day at home anything but the ecstatic holiday which a first day at home ought to be.

As for Mrs. Damerel, when she went into her own house, after seeing this dangerous intruder to the door, the sense of relief which had been her only conscious feeling up to this moment, gave place to the irritation and repressed wrath which, I think, was very natural. She said to herself, bitterly, that as the father had been so the daughter was. They consulted their own happiness, their own feelings, and left her to make everything straight behind them. What did it matter what she felt? What was the good of her but to bear the burden of their self-indulgence?—to make up for the wrongs they did, and conceal the scandal? I am aware that in such a case, as in almost all others, the general sympathy goes with the young; but yet I think poor Mrs. Damerel had much justification for the bitterness in her heart. She wept a few hot tears by herself which nobody even knew of or suspected, and then she returned to the children's lessons and her daily business, her head swimming a little, and with a weakness born of past agitation, but subdued into a composure not feigned but real. For after all, everything can be remedied

except exposure, she thought to herself; and going to Miss Margetts' showed at least a glimmering of common sense on the part of the runaway, and saved all public discussion of the "difficulty" between Rose and her mother. Mrs. Damerel was a clergyman's wife—nay, one might say a clergywoman in her own person, accustomed to all the special decorums and exactitudes which those who take the duties of the caste to heart consider incumbent upon that section of humanity; but she set about inventing a series of fibs on the spot with an ease which I fear long practice and custom had given. How many fibs had she been compelled to tell on her husband's behalf?—exquisite little romances about his health and his close study, and the mental occupations which kept him from little necessary duties; although she knew perfectly well that his study was mere desultory reading, and his delicate health self-indulgence. She had shielded him so with that delicate network of falsehood that the Rector had gone out of the world with the highest reputation. *She* had all her life been subject to remark as rather a commonplace wife for such a man, but no one had dreamt of criticising him. Now she had the same thing to begin over again; and she carried her system to such perfection that she began upon her own family, as indeed in her husband's case she had always done, imbuing the children with a belief in his abstruse studies and sensitive organization, as well as the outer world.

"Rose has gone to pay Miss Margetts a visit," she said, at the early dinner. "I think a little change will do her good. I shall run up to town in a few days and see after her things."

"Gone to Miss Margetts'! I wonder why no one ever said so," cried Agatha, who was always full of curiosity. "What a funny thing to go off on a visit without even saying a word!"

"It was settled quite suddenly," said the mother, with perfect composure. "I don't think she has been looking well for some days; and I always intended to go to town about her things."

"What a very funny thing," repeated Agatha, "to go off at five o'clock; never to say a word to anyone—not even to take a box with her clothes, only that little black bag. I never heard of anything so funny; and to be so excited about it that she never went to bed."

"Do not talk nonsense," said Mrs. Damerel, sharply; "it was not decided till the evening before, after you were all asleep."

"But, mamma——"

"I think you might take some of this pudding down to poor Mary Simpson," said Mrs. Damerel, calmly—"she has no appetite, poor girl; and, Agatha, you can call at the post-office, and ask Mrs. Brown if her niece has got a place yet—I think she might suit me as housemaid, if she has not got a place."

"Then, thank heaven," said Agatha, diverted entirely into a new channel, "we shall get rid of Mary Jane!"

Having thus, as it were, made her experiment upon the subject

nearest her heart, Mrs. Damerel had her little romance perfectly ready for Mr. Incledon when he came. "You must not blame me for a little disappointment to-day," she said, "though indeed I ought to have sent you word had I not been so busy. You must have seen that Rose was not herself yesterday. She has her father's fine organization, poor child, and all our troubles have told upon her. I have sent her to her old school, to Miss Margetts, whose care I can rely upon, for a little change. It will be handy in many ways, for I must go to town for shopping, and it will be less fatiguing to Rose to meet me there than to go up and down on the same day."

"Then she was not well yesterday?" said Mr. Incledon, over whose face various changes had passed of disappointment, annoyance, and relief.

"Could you not see that?" said the mother, smiling with gentle reprooof. "When did Rose show temper before? She has her faults, but that is not one of them; but she has her father's fine organization. I don't hesitate to say now, when it is all over, that poverty brought us many annoyances and some privations, as it does to everybody, I suppose. Rose has borne up bravely, but of course she felt them; and it is a speciality with such highly-strung natures," said this elaborate deceiver, "that they never break down till the pressure is removed."

"Ah! I ought to have known it," said Mr. Incledon; "and, indeed," he added, after a pause, "what you say is a great relief, for I had begun to fear that so young a creature might have found out that she had been too hasty—that she did not know her own mind."

"It is not her mind, but her nerves and temperament," said the mother. "I shall leave her quite quiet for a few days."

"And must I leave her quiet too?"

"I think so, if you don't mind. I could not tell you at the time," said Mrs. Damerel, with absolute truth and candour such as give the best possible effect when used as accompaniments to the pious fib, "for I knew you would have wished to help us, and I could not have allowed it; but there have been a great many things to put up with. You don't know what it is to be left to the tender mercies of a maid-of-all-work, and Rose has had to soil her poor little fingers, as I never thought to see a child of mine do; it is no disgrace, especially when it is all over," she added, with a little laugh.

"Disgrace! it is nothing but honour," said the lover, with some moisture starting into his eyes. He would have liked to kiss the poor little fingers of which her mother spoke with playful tenderness, and went away comparatively happy, wondering whether there was not something more to do than he had originally thought of by which he could show his pride and delight and loving homage to his Rose.

Poor Mrs. Damerel! I am afraid it was very wicked of her, as a clergywoman who ought to show a good example to the world in

general; and she could have whipped Rose all the same for thus leaving her in the lurch; but still it was clever, and a gift which most women have to exercise, more or less.

But oh! the terrors that overwhelmed her soul when, after having dismissed Mr. Incledon, thus wrapped over again in a false security, she bethought herself that Rose had travelled to town in company with young Wodehouse; that they had been shut up for more than an hour together; that he had told his love-tale, and she had confided enough to him to leave him not hopeless at least. Other things might be made to arrange themselves; but what was to be done with the always rebellious girl when the man she preferred—a young lover, impassioned and urgent—had come into the field?

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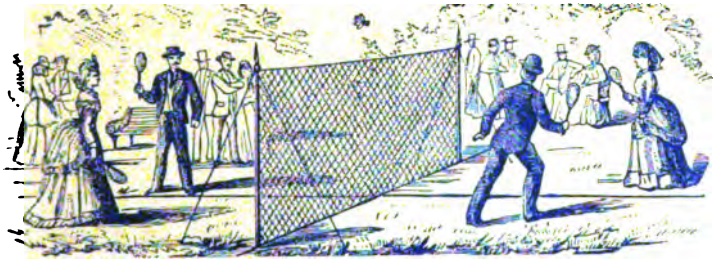

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THE

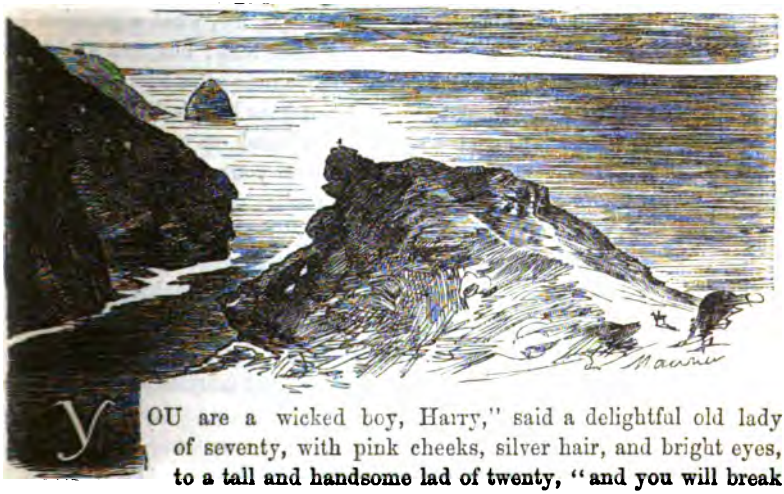
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1874.

Three Feathers.

CHAPTER I.

MASTER HARRY.



"YOU are a wicked boy, Harry," said a delightful old lady of seventy, with pink cheeks, silver hair, and bright eyes, to a tall and handsome lad of twenty, "and you will break your mother's heart. But it's the way of all you Trelyons. Good looks, bad temper, plenty of money, and the maddest fashion of spending it—there you are, the whole of you. Why won't you go into the house?"

"It's a nice house to go into, ain't it?" said the boy, with a rude laugh. "Look at it!"

It was, indeed, a nice house,—a quaint, old-fashioned, strongly-built place, that had withstood the western gales for some three or four centuries. And it was set amid beautiful trees, and it overlooked a picturesque little valley, and from this garden-terrace in front of it you would catch some

glimpse of a tiny harbour on the Cornish coast, with its line of blue water passing out through the black rocks to the sea beyond.

"And why shouldn't the blinds be down?" said the old lady. "It's the anniversary of your father's death."

"It's always the anniversary of somebody's death," her grandson said, impatiently flicking at a standard rose with his riding-switch, "and it's nothing but snivel, snivel from morning till night, and the droning of the organ in the chapel, and the burning of incense all about the place, and everybody and everything dressed in black, and the whole house haunted by parsons. The parsons about the neighbourhood ain't enough,—they must come from all parts of the country, and you run against 'em in the hall, and you knock them over when you're riding out at the gate, and just when you expect to get a pheasant or two at the place you know, out jumps a brace of parsons that have been picking brambles."

"Harry, Harry, where do you expect to go to, if you hate the parsons so?" the old lady said; but there was scarcely that earnestness of reproof in her tone that ought to have been there. "And yet it's the way of all you Trelyons. Did I ever tell you how your grandfather hunted poor Mr. Pascoe that winter night? Dear, dear, what a jealous man your grandfather was at that time, to be sure! And when I told him that John Pascoe had been carrying stories to my father, and how that he (your grandfather) was to be forbidden the house, dear me, what a passion he was in! He wouldn't come near the house after that; but one night, as Mr. Pascoe was walking home, your grandfather rode after him, and overtook him, and called out, 'Look here, sir! you have been telling lies about me. I respect your cloth, and I won't lay a hand on you; but, by the Lord, I will hunt you till there isn't a rag on your back!' And sure enough he did; and when poor Mr. Pascoe understood what he meant he was nearly out of his wits, and off he went over the fields, and over the walls, and across the ditches, with your grandfather after him, driving his horse at him when he stopped, and only shouting with laughter in answer to his cries and prayers. Dear, dear, what a to-do there was all over the county side after that! and your grandfather durstn't come near the house,—or he was too proud to come; but we got married for all that—oh, yes! we got married for all that."

The old lady laughed in her quiet way.

"You were too good for a parson, grandmother, I'll be bound," said Master Harry Trelyon. "You are one of the right sort, you are. If I could find any girl, now, like what you were then, see if I wouldn't try to get her for a wife."

"Oh yes!" said the old lady, vastly pleased, and smiling a little; "there were two or three of your opinion at one time, Harry. Many a time I feared they would be the death of each other. And I never could have made up my mind, I do believe, if your grandfather hadn't come in among them to settle the question. It was all over with me then. It's the way of you Trelyons; you never give a poor girl a chance. It isn't ask and have,—it's come and take; and so a girl becomes a Trelyon before

she knows where she is. Dear, dear, what a fine man your grandfather was, to be sure; and such a pleasant, frank, good-natured way as he had with him! Nobody could say No twice to him. The girls were all wild about him; and the story there was about our marriage! Yes, indeed, I was mad about him too, only that he was just as mad about me; and that night of the ball, when my father was angry because I would not dance, and when all the young men could not understand it, for how did they know that your grandfather was out in the garden, and asking nothing less than that I should run away with him there and then to Gretna? Why, the men of that time had some spirit, lad, and the girls, too, I can tell you; and I couldn't say No to him, and away we went just before daylight, and I in my ball-dress, sure enough, and we never stopped till we got to Exeter. And then the fight for fresh horses, and off again; and your grandfather had such a way with him, Harry, that the silliest of girls would have plucked up her spirits! And oh! the money he scattered to get the best of the horses at the posting-houses; for, of course, we knew that my father was close after us, and if he overtook us, then a convent in France for me, and good-bye to George Trelyon——"

"Well, grandmother, don't stop!" cried the lad before her: he had heard the story a hundred times, but he could have heard it another hundred times, merely to see the light that lit up the beautiful old face.

"We didn't stop, you booby!" she said, mistaking his remark; "stopping wasn't for George Trelyon. And oh! that morning as we drove into Carlisle, and we looked back, and there, sure enough, was my father's carriage a long way off. Your grandfather swore, Harry—yes, he did; and well it might make a man swear. For our horses were dead beat, and before we should have time to change, my father would be up to claim me. But there! it was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me, for who could have expected to find old Lady MacGorman at the door of the hotel, just getting into her carriage, and when she saw me she stared, and I was in such a fright I couldn't speak, and she called out, 'Good heavens, child, why did you run away in your ball-dress? And who's the man?' 'His name, madam,' said I, 'is George Trelyon.' For by this time he was in the yard, raging about horses. 'A nephew of the Admiral, isn't he?' she says, and I told her he was; and then quick as lightning what does she do but whip round into the yard, get hold of your grandfather, my dear, and bundle both of us into her own carriage! Harry, my father's carriage was at the end of the street, as I am a living woman. And just as we drove off, we heard that dear, good, kind old creature call out to the people around, 'Five guineas apiece to you if you keep back the old gentleman's carriage for an hour!' and such a laughing as your grandfather had as we drove down the streets, and over the bridge, and up the hill, and out the level lanes. Dear, dear, I can see the country now. I can remember every hedge, and the two rivers we crossed, and the hills up in the north, and all the time your grandfather kept up the laugh, for he saw I was frightened. And there we were wedded, sure

enough, and all in good time, for Lady MacGorman's guineas had saved us, so that we were actually driving back again when we saw my father's carriage coming along the road—at no great speed to be sure, for one of the horses was lame, and the other had cast a shoe—all the result of that good old creature's money. And then I said to your grandfather, 'What shall we do, George?' 'We shall have to stand and deliver, Sue!' says he; and with that he had the horses pulled up, and we got out. And when my father came up he got out, too, and George took me by the hand—there was no more laughing now, I can tell you, for it was but natural I should cry a bit—and he took off his hat, and led me forward to my father. I don't know what he said, I was in such a fright; but I know that my father looked at him for a minute—and George was standing rather abashed, perhaps, but then so handsome he looked, and so good-natured!—and then my father burst into a roar of laughter, and came forward and shook him by the hand; and all that he would say then, or at any other time to the day of his death, was only this—'By Jupiter, sir, that was a devilish good pair that took you straight on end to Exeter!'"

"I scarcely remember my grandfather," the boy said; "but he couldn't have been a handsomer man than my father, nor a better man either."

"I don't say that," the old lady observed, candidly. "Your father was just such another. 'Like father, like son,' they used to say when he was a boy. But then, you see, your father would go and choose a wife for himself in spite of everybody, just like all you Trelyons, and so——"

But she remembered, and checked herself. She began to tell the lad in how far he resembled his grandfather in appearance, and he accepted these descriptions of his features and figure in a heedless manner, as of one who had grown too familiar with the fact of his being handsome to care about it. Had not every one paid him compliments, more or less indirect, from his cradle upwards? He was, indeed, all that the old lady would have desired to see in a Trelyon—tall, square-shouldered, clean-limbed, with dark grey eyes set under black eyelashes, a somewhat aquiline nose, proud and well-cut lips, a handsome forehead, and a complexion which might have been pale, but for its having been bronzed by constant exposure to sun and weather. There was something very winning about his face, when he chose to be winning; and, when he laughed, the laughter, being quite honest and careless and musical, was delightful to hear. With these personal advantages, joined to a fairly quick intelligence and a ready sympathy, Master Harry Trelyon ought to have been a universal favourite. So far from that being the case, a section of the persons whom he met, and whom he shocked by his rudeness, quickly dismissed him as an irreclaimable cub; another section, with whom he was on better terms, considered him a bad-tempered lad, shook their heads in a humorous fashion over his mother's trials, and were inclined to keep out of his way; while the best of his friends endeavoured to throw the blame of his faults on his bringing up, and maintained that he had many good qualities if only they had been properly developed. The only thing

certain about these various criticisms was that they did not concern very much the subject of them.

"And if I am like my grandfather," he said, good-naturedly, to the old lady, who was seated in a garden-chair, "why don't you get me a wife such as he had?"

"You? A wife?" she repeated, indignantly, remembering that, after all, to praise the good looks and excuse the hot-headedness of the Trelyons was not precisely the teaching this young man needed. "You take a wife? Why, what girl would have you? You are a mere booby. You can scarcely write your name. George Trelyon was a gentleman, sir. He could converse in six languages——"

"And swear considerably in one, I've heard," the lad said, with an impertinent laugh.

"You take a wife? I believe the stable-boys are better educated than you are in manners, as well as in learning. All you are fit for is to become a horse-breaker to a cavalry regiment, or a gamekeeper; and I do believe it is that old wretch, Pentecost Luke, who has ruined you. Oh! I heard how Master Harry used to defy his governess, and would say nothing to her for days together, but

As I was going to St. Ives,
I met fifty old wives.

Then, old Luke had to be brought in, and Luke's cure for stubbornness was to give the brat a gun and teach him to shoot starlings. Oh! I know the whole story, my son, though I wasn't in Cornwall at the time. And then Master Harry must be sent to school; but two days afterwards Master Harry is discovered at the edge of a wood, coolly seated with a gun in his hand, waiting for his ferrets to drive out the rabbits. Then Master Harry is furnished with a private tutor; but a parcel of gunpowder is found below the gentleman's chair, with the heads of several lucifer matches lying about. So Master Harry is allowed to have his own way; and his master and preceptor is a lying old gamekeeper, and Master Harry can't read a page out of a book, but he can snare birds, and stuff fish, and catch butterflies, and go cliff-hunting on a horse that is bound to break his neck some day. Why, sir, what do you think a girl would have to say to you if you married her? She would expect you to take her into society; she would expect you to be agreeable in your manners, and be able to talk to people. Do you think she would care about your cunning ways of catching birds, as if you were a cat or a sparrowhawk?"

He only flicked at the rose, and laughed; lecturing had but little effect on him.

"Do you think a girl would come to a house like this,—one half of it filled with dogs, and birds, and squirrels, and what not, the other furnished like a chapel in a cemetery? A combination of a church and a menagerie, that's what I call it."

"Grandmother," he said, "these parsons have been stuffing your head full of nonsense about me."

"Have they?" said the old lady, sharply, and eyeing him keenly. "Are you sure it is all nonsense? You talk of marrying,—and you know that no girl of your own station in life would look at you. What about that public-house in the village, and the two girls there, and your constant visits?"

He turned round with a quick look of anger in his face.

"Who told you such infamous stories? I suppose one of the cringing, sneaking, white-livered—— Bah!"

He switched the head off the rose, and strode away, saying, as he went—

"Grandmother, you mustn't stay here long. The air of the place affects even you. Another week of it, and you'll be as mean as the rest of them."

But he was in a very bad temper, despite his careless gait. There was a scowl on the handsome and boyish face that was not pleasant to see. He walked round to the stables, kicked about the yard while his horse was being saddled, and then rode out of the grounds, and along the highway, until he went clattering down the steep and stony main street of Eglosilyan.

The children knew well this black horse: they had a superstitious fear of him, and they used to scurry into the cottages when his wild rider, who seldom tightened rein, rode down the precipitous thoroughfare. But just at this moment, when young Trelyon was paying little heed as to where he was going, a small, white-haired bundle of humanity came running out of a doorway, and stumbled, and fell right in the way of the horse. The lad was a good rider, but all the pulling up in the world could not prevent the forefeet of the horse, as they were shot out into the stones, from rolling over that round bundle of clothes. Trelyon leapt to the ground, and caught up the child, who stared at him with big, blue, frightened eyes.

"It's you, young Pentecost, is it? And what the dickens do you mean by trying to knock over my horse, eh?"

The small boy was terrified, but quite obviously not hurt a bit; and his captor, leading the horse with one hand and affixing the bridle to the door, carried him into the cottage.

"Well, Mother Luke," said young Trelyon, "I know you've got too many children, but do you expect that I'm going to put them out of the way for you?"

She uttered a little scream, and caught at the boy.

"Oh! there's no harm done; but I suppose I must give him a couple of sovereigns because he nearly frightened me out of my wits. Poor little kid! it's hard on him that you should have given him such a name. I suppose you thought it was Cornish because it begins with *Pen*."

"You knaw 'twere his vather's name, Maäster Harry," said Mrs. Luke, smiling as she saw that the child's chubby fingers were being closed over two bright gold pieces.

Just at that moment, Master Harry, his eyes having got accustomed to the twilight of the kitchen, perceived that among the little crowd of children, at the fireside end, a young lady was sitting. She was an

insignificant little person, with dark eyes; she had a slate in her hand; the children were round her in a circle.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Wenna!" the young man said, removing his hat quickly, and blushing all over his handsome face. "I did not see you in the dark. Is your father at the inn?—I was going to see him. I hope I haven't frightened you?"

"Yes, my father has come back from Plymouth," said the young lady, quietly, and without rising. "And I think you might be a little more careful in riding through the village, Mr. Trelyon."

"Good-morning," he said. "Take better care of Master Pentecost, Mother Luke." And with that he went out, and got into the saddle again, and set off to ride down to the inn, not quite so recklessly as heretofore.

CHAPTER II.

Jim Crow.

When Miss Wenna, or Morwenna, as her mother in a freak of romanticism had called her, had finished her teaching, and had inspected some fashioning of garments in which Mrs. Luke was engaged, she put on her light shawl and her hat, and went out into the fresh air. She was now standing in the main street of Eglosilyan; and there were houses right down below her, and houses far above her, but a stranger would have been puzzled to say where this odd little village began and ended. For it was built in a straggling fashion on the sides of two little ravines; and the small stone cottages were so curiously scattered among the trees, and the plots of garden were so curiously banked up with walls that were smothered in wild-flowers, that you could only decide which was the main thoroughfare by the presence there of two greystone chapels—one the Wesleyans' Ebenezer, the other the Bible Christians'. The churches were far away on the uplands, where they were seen like towers along the bleak cliffs by the passing sailors. But perhaps Eglosilyan proper ought to be considered as lying down in the hollow, where the two ravines converged. For here was the chief inn; and here was the over-shot flour-mill; and here was the strange little harbour, tortuous, narrow, and deep, into which one or two heavy coasters came for slate, bringing with them timber and coal. Eglosilyan is certainly a picturesque place; but one's difficulty is to get anything like a proper view of it. The black and mighty cliffs at the mouth of the harbour, where the Atlantic seethes and boils in the calmest weather, the beautiful blue-green water under the rocks and along the stone quays, the quaint bridge, and the mill, are pleasant to look at; but where is Eglosilyan? Then if you go up one of the ravines, and get among the old houses, with their tree-fuchsias, and hydrangeas, and marigolds, and lumps of white quartz in the quaint little gardens, you find yourself looking down the chimneys of one portion

of Eglosilyan, and looking up to the doorsteps of another—everywhere a confusion of hewn rock, and natural terrace, and stone walls, and bushes, and hart's-tongue fern. Some thought that the 'Trelyon Arms' should be considered the natural centre of Eglosilyan; but you could not see half-a-dozen houses from any of its windows. Others would have given the post of honour to the National School, which had been there since 1843; but it was up in a by-street, and could only be approached by a flight of steps cut in the slate wall that banked up the garden in front of it. Others, for reasons which need not be mentioned, held that the most important part of Eglosilyan was the Napoleon Hotel—a humble little pot-house, frequented by the workers in the slate-quarries, who came there to discuss the affairs of the nation and hear the news. Anyhow, Eglosilyan was a green, bright, rugged, and picturesque little place, oftentimes wet with the western rains, and at all times fresh and sweet with the moist breezes from the Atlantic.

Miss Wenna went neither down the street nor up the street, but took a rough and narrow little path leading by some of the cottages to the cliffs overlooking the sea. There was a sound of music in the air; and by-and-by she came in sight of an elderly man, who, standing in an odd little donkey-cart, and holding the reins in one hand, held with the other a cornopean, which he played with great skill. No one in Eglosilyan could tell precisely whether Michael Jago had been bugler to some regiment, or had acquired his knowledge of the cornopean in a travelling show; but everybody liked to hear the cheerful sound, and came out by the cottage-door to welcome him, as he went from village to village with his cart, whether they wanted to buy suet or not. And now, as Miss Wenna saw him approach, he was playing "The Girl I left behind me;" and as there was no one about to listen to him, the pathos of certain parts, and the florid and skilful execution of others, showed that Mr. Jago had a true love for music, and did not merely use it to advertise his wares.

"Good-morning to you, Mr. Jago," said Miss Wenna, as he came up.

"'Marnin, Miss Rosewarne," he said, taking down his cornopean.

"This is a narrow road for your cart."

"'Tain't a very good way; but, bless you, me and my donkey we're used to any zart of a road. I dü believe we could go down to the bache, down the face of Black Cliff."

"Mr. Jago, I want to say something to you. If you are dealing with old Mother Keam to-day, you'll give her a good extra bit, won't you? And so with Mrs. Geswetherick, for she has had no letter from her son now for three months. And this will pay you, and you'll say nothing about it, you know."

She put the coin in his hand—it was an arrangement of old standing between the two.

"Well, yü be a good young lady; yaas, yü be," he said, as he drove on; and then she heard him announcing his arrival to the people of

Eglosilyan by playing, in a very elaborate manner, "Love's young Dream."

The solitary young person who was taking her morning walk now left this rugged road, and found herself on the bleak and high uplands of the coast. Over there was the sea—a fair summer sea; and down into the south-west stretched a tall line of cliff, black, precipitous, and jagged, around the base of which even this blue sea was churned into seething masses of white. Close by was a church; and the very gravestones were propped up, so that they should withstand the force of the gales that sweep over those windy heights.

She went across the uplands, and passed down to a narrow neck of rock, which connected with the mainland a huge projecting promontory, on the summit of which was a square and strongly-built tower. On both sides of this ledge of rock the sea from below passed into narrow channels, and roared into gigantic caves; but when once you had ascended again to the summit of the tall projecting cliff, the distance softened the sound into a low continuous murmur, and the motion of the waves beneath you was only visible in the presence of that white foam where the black cliffs met the blue sea.

She went out pretty nearly to the verge of the cliff, where the close, short, wind-swept sea-grass gave way to immense and ragged masses of rock, descending sheer into the waves below; and here she sat down, and took out a book, and began to read. But her thoughts were busier than her eyes. Her attention would stray away from the page before her—to the empty blue sea, where scarcely a sail was to be seen, and to the far headlands lying under the white of the summer sky. One of these headlands was Tintagel; and close by were the ruins of the great castle, where Uther Pendragon kept his state, where the mystic Arthur was born, where the brave Sir Tristram went to see his true love, La Belle Isoulde. All that world had vanished, and gone into silence; could anything be more mute and still than those bare uplands out at the end of the world, these voiceless cliffs, and the empty circle of the sea? The sun was hot on the rocks beneath her, where the pink quartz lay encrusted among the slate; but there was scarcely the hum of an insect to break the stillness, and the only sign of life about was the circling of one or two sea-birds, so far below her that their cries could not be heard.

"Yes, it was a long time ago," the girl was thinking, as the book lay unheeded on her knee. "A sort of mist covers it now, and the knights seem great and tall men as you think of them riding through the fog, almost in silence. But then there were the brighter days, when the tournaments were held, and the sun came out, and the noble ladies wore rich colours, and every one came to see how beautiful they were. And how fine it must have been to have sat there, and have all the knights ready to fight for you, and glad when you gave them a bit of ribbon or a smile! And in these days, too, it must be a fine thing to be a noble lady, and beautiful, and tall, like a princess; and to go among the poor

people, putting everything to rights, because you have lots of money, and because the roughest of the men look up to you, and think you a queen, and will do anything you ask. What a happy life a grand and beautiful lady must have, when she is tall, and fair-haired, and sweet in her manner; and every one around her is pleased to serve her, and she can do a kindness by merely saying a word to the poor people! But if you are only Jim Crow? There's Mabyn, now, she is everybody's favourite because she is so pretty; and whatever she does, that is always beautiful and graceful, because she is so. Father never calls *her* Jim Crow. And I ought to be jealous of her, for every one praises her, and mere strangers ask for her photograph; and Mr. Roscorla always writes to her, and Mr. Trelyon stuffed those squirrels for her, though he never offered to stuff squirrels for me. But I cannot be jealous of Mabyn—I cannot even try. She looks at you with her blue, soft eyes, and you fall in love with her; and that is the advantage of being handsome, and beautiful, for you can please every one, and make every one like you, and confer favours on people all day long. But if you are small, and plain, and dark—if your father calls you Jim Crow—what can you do?"

These despondent fancies did not seem to depress her much. The gloom of them was certainly not visible on her face, nor yet in the dark eyes, which had a strange and winning earnestness in them. She pulled a bit of tormentil from among the close warm grass on the rocks, and she hummed a line or two of "Wapping Old Stairs." Then she turned to her book; but by-and-by her eyes wandered away again, and she fell to thinking.

"If you were a man, now," she was silently saying to herself, "that would be quite different. It would not matter how ugly you were—for you could try to be brave or clever, or a splendid rider, or something of that kind—and nobody would mind how ugly you were. But it's very hard to be a woman, and to be plain; you feel as if you were good for nothing, and had no business to live. They say that you should cultivate the graces of the mind; but it's only old people who say that; and perhaps you mayn't have any mind to cultivate. How much better it would be to be pretty while you are young, and leave the cultivation of the mind for after years! and that is why I have to prevent mother from scolding Mabyn for never reading a book. If I were like Mabyn, I should be so occupied in giving people the pleasure of looking at me and talking to me that I should have no time for books. Mabyn is like a princess. And if she were a grand lady, instead of being only an innkeeper's daughter, what a lot of things she could do about Eglosilyan! She could go and persuade Mr. Roscorla, by the mere sweetness of her manner, to be less suspicious of people, and less bitter in talking; she could go up to Mrs. Trelyon and bring her out more among her neighbours, and make the house pleasanter for her son; she could go to my father and beg him to be a little more considerate to mother when she is angry; she might get some influence over Mr. Trelyon himself, and make

him less of a petulant boy. Perhaps Mabyn may do some of these things, when she gets a little older. It ought to please her to try at all events; and who can withstand her when she likes to be affectionate and winning? Not Jim Crow, any way."

She heaved a sigh, not a very dismal one, and got up and prepared to go home. She was humming carelessly to herself—

> Your Polly has never been false, she declares,
> Since last time we parted at Wapping Old Stairs;

—she had got that length when she was startled into silence by the sound of a horse's feet, and, turning quickly round, found Mr. Trelyon galloping up the steep slope that stretches across to the mainland. It was no pleasant place to ride across, for a stumble of the animal's foot would have sent horse and rider down into the gulfs below, where the blue-green sea was surging in among the black rocks.

"Oh! how could you be so foolish as to do that?" she cried. "I beg of you to come down, Mr. Trelyon. I cannot——"

"Why, Dick is as sure-footed as I am," said the lad, his handsome face flushing with the ride up from Eglosilyan. "I thought I should find you here. There's no end of a row going on at the inn, Miss Wenna, and that's a fact. I fancied I'd better come and tell you; for there's no one can put things straight like you, you know."

A quarrel between her father and her mother—it was of no rare occurrence, and she was not much surprised.

"Thank you, Mr. Trelyon," she said. "It is very kind of you to have taken the trouble. I will go down at once."

But she was looking rather anxiously at him, as he turned round his horse.

"Mr. Trelyon," she said, quickly, "would you oblige me by getting down and leading your horse across until you reach the path?"

He was out of the saddle in a moment.

"I will walk down with you to Eglosilyan, if you like," he said, carelessly. "You often come up here, don't you?"

"Nearly every day. I always take a walk in the forenoon."

"Does Mabyn ever go with you?" His companion noticed that he always addressed her as Miss Wenna, whereas her sister was simply Mabyn.

"Not often."

"I wonder she doesn't ride—I am sure she would look well on horseback—don't you think so?"

"Mabyn would look well anywhere," said the elder sister, with a smile.

"If she would like to try a lady's saddle on your father's cob, I would send you one down from the Hall," the lad said. "My mother never rides now. But perhaps I'd better speak to your father about it. Oh! by the way, he told me a capital story this morning that he heard in coming from Plymouth to Launceston in the train. Two farmers belonging to Launceston had got into a carriage the day before, and found in it

a parson, against whom they had a grudge. He didn't know either of them by sight; and so they pretended to be strangers, and sat down opposite each other. One of them put up the window; the other put it down with a bang. The first drew it up again, and said, 'I desire you to leave the window alone, sir!' The other said, 'I mean to have that window down, and if you touch it again I will throw you out of it.' Meanwhile, the parson at the other end of the carriage, who was a little fellow and rather timid, had got into an agony of fright; and at last, when the two men seemed about to seize each other by the throat, he called out, 'For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, do not quarrel. Sir, I beg of you, I implore you, as a clergyman I entreat you, to put up that knife!' And then, of course, they both turned upon him like tigers, and slanged him, and declared they would break his back over this same window. Fancy the fright he was in!"

The boy laughed merrily.

"Do you think that was a good joke?" the girl beside him asked, quietly.

He seemed a little embarrassed.

"Do you think it was a very manly and courageous thing for two big farmers to frighten a small and timid clergyman? I think it was rather mean and cowardly. I see no joke in it at all."

His face grew more and more red; and then he frowned with vexation.

"I don't suppose they meant any harm," he said, curtly; "but you know we can't all be squaring every word and look by the Prayer-book. And I suppose the parson himself, if he had known, would not have been so fearfully serious but that he could have taken a joke like any one else. By the way, this is the nearest road to Trevenna, isn't it? I have got to ride over there before the afternoon, Miss Rosewarne; so I shall bid you good-day."

He got on horseback again, and took off his cap to her, and rode away.

"Good-day, Mr. Trelyon," she said, meekly.

And so she walked down to the inn by herself, and was inclined to reproach herself for being so very serious, and for being unable to understand a joke like any one else. Yet she was not unhappy about it. It was a pity if Mr. Trelyon were annoyed with her; but then, she had long ago taught herself to believe that she could not easily please people, like her sister Mabyn; and she cheerfully accepted the fact. Sometimes, it is true, she indulged in idle dreams of what she might do if she were beautiful, and rich, and noble; but she soon laughed herself out of these foolish fancies, and they left no sting of regret behind them. At this moment, as she walked down to Eglosilyan, with the tune of "Wapping Old Stairs" rocking itself to sleep in her head, and with her face brightened by her brisk walk, there was neither disappointment, nor envy, nor ambition in her mind. Not for her, indeed, were any of those furious passions that shake and set afire the lives of men and women; her lot was the calm and placid lot of the unregarded, and with it she was well content.

CHAPTER III.

Res Angustæ Domi.

When George Rosewarne, the father of this Miss Wenna, lived in eastern Devonshire, many folks thought him a fortunate man. He was the land-steward of a large estate, the owner of which lived in Paris, so that Rosewarne was practically his own master; he had a young and pretty wife, desperately fond of him; he had a couple of children and a comfortable home. As for himself, he was a tall, reddish-bearded, manly-looking fellow; the country folks called him Handsome George as they saw him riding his rounds of a morning; and they thought it a pity Mrs. Rosewarne was so often poorly, for she and her husband looked well together when they walked to church.

Handsome George did not seem much troubled by his wife's various ailments; he would only give the curtest answer when asked about her health. Yet he was not in any distinct way a bad husband. He was a man vaguely unwilling to act wrongly, but weak in staving off temptation; there was a sort of indolent selfishness about him of which he was scarcely aware; and to indulge this selfishness he was capable of a good deal of petty deceit and even treachery of a sort. It was not these failings, however, that made the relations of husband and wife not very satisfactory. Mrs. Rosewarne was passionately fond of her husband, and proportionately jealous of him. She was a woman of impulsive imagination and of sympathetic nature, clever, bright, and fanciful, well-read and well-taught, and altogether made of finer stuff than Handsome George. But this passion of jealousy altogether over-mastered her reason. When she did try to convince herself that she was in the wrong, the result was merely that she resolved to keep silence; but this forcible repression of her suspicions was worse in its effects than the open avowal of them. When the explosion came, George Rosewarne was mostly anxious to avoid it. He did not seek to set matters straight. He would get into a peevish temper for a few minutes, and tell her she was a fool; then he would go out for the rest of the day, and come home sulky in the evening. By this time she was generally in a penitent mood; and there is nothing an indolent sulky person likes so much as to be coaxed and caressed, with tears of repentance and affectionate promises, into a good temper again. There were too many of such scenes in George Rosewarne's home.

Mrs. Rosewarne may have been wrong, but people began to talk. For there had come to live at the Hall a certain Mrs. Shirley, who had lately returned from India, and was the sister-in-law, or some such relation, of George Rosewarne's master. She was a good-looking woman of forty, fresh-coloured and free-spoken, a little too fond of brandy-and-water, folks said, and a good deal too fond of the handsome steward, who now spent most of his time up at the big house. They said she was a grass-widow. They said there were reasons why her relations wished

her to be buried down there in the country, where she received no company, and made no efforts to get acquainted with the people who had called on her and left their cards. And amid all this gossip the name of George Rosewarne too frequently turned up; and there were nods and winks when Mrs. Shirley and the steward were seen to be riding about the country from day to day, presumably not always conversing about the property.

The blow fell at last, and that in a fashion that needs not be described here. There was a wild scene between two angry women. A few days after, a sallow-complexioned, white-haired old gentleman arrived from Paris, and was confronted by a red-faced fury, who gloried in her infatuation and disgrace, and dared him to interfere. Then there was a sort of conference of relatives held in the house which she still inhabited. The result of all this, so far as the Rosewarnes were concerned, was simply that the relatives of the woman, to hush the matter up and prevent further scandal, offered to purchase for George Rosewarne the "Trelyon Arms" at Eglosilyan, on condition that he should immediately, with his family, betake himself to that remote corner of the world, and undertake to hold no further communication of any sort with the woman who still swore that she would follow him to the end of the earth. George Rosewarne was pleased with the offer, and accepted it. He might have found some difficulty in discovering another stewardship, after the events that had just occurred. On the other hand, the "Trelyon Arms" at Eglosilyan was not a mere public-house. It was an old-fashioned, quaint, and comfortable inn, practically shut up during the winter, and in the summer made the head-quarters of a few families who had discovered it, and who went there as regularly as the warm weather came round. A few antiquarian folks, too, and a stray geologist or so generally made up the family party that sat down to dinner every evening in the big dining-room; and who that ever made one of the odd circle meeting in this strange and out-of-the-way place, ever failed to return to it when the winter had finally cleared away and the Atlantic got blue again?

George Rosewarne went down to see about it. He found in the inn an efficient housekeeper, who was thoroughly mistress of her duties and of the servants, so that he should have no great trouble about it, even though his wife were too ill to help. And so the Rosewarnes were drafted down to the Cornish coast, and as Mrs. Rosewarne was of Cornish birth, and as she had given both her daughters Cornish names, they gradually ceased to be regarded as strangers. They made many acquaintances and friends. Mrs. Rosewarne was a bright, rapid, playful talker; a woman of considerable reading and intelligence, and a sympathetic listener. Her husband knew all about horses, and dogs, and farming, and what not, so that Master Harry Trelyon, for example, was in the habit of consulting him almost daily.

They had a little parlour abutting on what once had been a bar, and here their friends sometimes dropped in to have a chat. There was a bar

no longer. The business of the inn was conducted overhead, and was exclusively of the nature described above. The pot-house of Eglosilyan was the Napoleon Hotel, a dilapidated place, half-way up one of the steep streets.

But in leaving Devonshire for Cornwall, the Rosewarnes had carried with them a fatal inheritance. They could not leave behind them the memory of the circumstances that had caused their flight; and ever and anon, as something occurred to provoke her suspicions, Mrs. Rosewarne would break out again into a passion of jealousy, and demand explanations and reassurances, which her husband half-indolently and half-sulkily refused. There was but one hand then—one voice that could still the raging waters. Morwenna Rosewarne knew nothing of that Devonshire story, any more than her sister or the neighbours did; but she saw that her mother had defects of temper, that she was irritable, unreasonable, and suspicious, and she saw that her father was inconsiderately indifferent and harsh. It was a hard task to reconcile these two; but the girl had all the patience of a born peacemaker, and patience is the more necessary to the settlement of such a dispute, in that it is generally impossible for any human being, outside the two who are quarrelling, to discover any ground for the quarrel.

"Why, what's the matter, mother?" she said on this occasion, taking off her hat and shawl as if she had heard nothing about it. "I do think you have been crying."

The pretty, pale woman, with the large black eyes and smoothly-brushed dark hair, threw a book on to the table, and said, with a sort of half-hysterical laugh, "How stupid it is, Wenna, to cry over the misfortunes of people in books, isn't it? Do you remember when old Pentecost Luke got the figure-head of Bernadotte of Sweden and stuck it in his kitchen-garden, how fierce the whole place looked? And then Harry Trelyon got a knife, and altered the scowl into a grin, and painted it a bit, and then you couldn't go into the garden without laughing. And when a man twists the corners of his heroine's mouth downwards, or when it pleases him to twist them upwards, why should one either cry or laugh? Well, well, she was a good sort of girl, and deserved a better fate. I will dry my eyes and think no more about her."

The forced dragging-in of Bernadotte of Sweden, and the incoherent speech that followed, would not have deceived Miss Wenna in any case, but now she was to receive other testimony to the truth of Mr. Trelyon's report. There was seated at the window of the room a tall and strikingly handsome young girl of sixteen, whose almost perfect profile was clearly seen against the light. Just at this moment she rose and stepped across the room to the door, and as she went by she said, with just a trace of contemptuous indifference on the proud and beautiful face, "It is only another quarrel, Wenna."

"Mother," said the girl, when her sister had gone, "tell me what it is about. What have you said to father? Where is he?"

There was an air of quiet decision about her that did not detract from the sympathy visible in her face. Mrs. Rosewarne began to cry again. Then she took her daughter's hand, and made her sit down by her, and told her all her troubles. What was the girl to make of it? It was the old story of suspicion, and challenging, and sulky denial, and then hot words and anger. She could make out, at least, that her mother had first been made anxious about something he had inadvertently said about his visit to Plymouth on the previous two days. In reply to her questions he had grown peevishly vague, and had then spoken in bravado of the pleasant evening he had spent at the theatre. Wenna reasoned with her mother, and pleaded with her, and at last exercised a little authority over her, at the end of which she agreed that, if her husband would tell her with whom he had been to the theatre, she would be satisfied, would speak no more on the subject, and would even formally beg his forgiveness.

"Because, mother, I have something to tell you," the daughter said, "when you are all quite reconciled."

"Was it in the letter you read just now?"

"Yes, mother."

The girl still held the letter in her hand. It was lying on the table when she came in, but she had not opened it and glanced over the contents until she saw that her mother was yielding to her prayers.

"It is from Mr. Roscorla, Wenna," the mother said; and now she saw, as she might have seen before, that her daughter was a little paler than usual, and somewhat agitated.

"Yes, mother."

"What is it, then? You look frightened."

"I must settle this matter first," said the girl, calmly; and then she folded up the letter, and, still holding it in her hand, went off to find her father.

George Rosewarne, seeking calm after the storm, was seated on a large and curiously-carved bench of Spanish oak placed by the door of the inn. He was smoking his pipe, and lazily looking at some pigeons that were flying about the mill and occasionally alighting on the roof. In the calm of the midsummer's day there was no sound but the incessant throbbing of the big wheel over there and the plash of the water.

"Now, don't bother me, Wenna," he said, the moment he saw her approach. "I know you've come to make a fuss. You mind your own business."

"Mother is very sorry ——" the girl was beginning in a meek way, when he interrupted her rudely.

"I tell you to mind your own business. I must have an end of this. I have stood it long enough. Do you hear?"

But she did not go away. She stood there, with her quiet, patient face, not heeding his angry looks.

"Father, don't be hard on her. She is very sorry. She is willing to beg your pardon if you will only tell her who went to the theatre with you

at Plymouth, and relieve her from this anxiety. That is all. Father, who went to the theatre with you?"

"Oh, go away!" he said, relapsing into a sulky condition. "You're growing up to be just such another as your mother."

"I cannot wish for any better," the girl said, mildly. "She is a good woman, and she loves you dearly."

"Why," he said, turning suddenly upon her, and speaking in an injured way, "no one went with me to the theatre at Plymouth! Did I say that anybody did? Surely a man must do something to spend the evening if he is by himself in a strange town."

Wenna put her hand on her father's shoulder, and said, "Da, why didn't you take me to Plymouth?"

"Well, I will next time. You're a good lass," he said, still in the same sulky way.

"Now come in and make it up with mother. She is anxious to make it up."

He looked at his pipe.

"In a few minutes, Wenna. When I finish my pipe."

"She is waiting now," said the girl, quietly; and with that her father burst into a loud laugh, and got up and shrugged his shoulders, and then, taking his daughter by the ear, and saying that she was a sly little cat, he walked into the house and into the room where his wife awaited him.

Meanwhile, Wenna Rosewarne had stolen off to her own little room, and there she sat down at the window, and with trembling fingers took out a letter and began to read it. It was certainly a document of some length, consisting, indeed, of four large pages of blue paper, covered with a small, neat, and precise handwriting. She had not got on very far with it, when the door of the room was opened, and Mrs. Rosewarne appeared, the pale face and large dark eyes being now filled with a radiant pleasure. Her husband had said something friendly to her; and the quick, imaginative nature had leapt to the conclusion that all was right again, and that there were to be no more needless quarrels.

"And now, Wenna," she said, sitting down by the girl, "what is it all about? and why did you look so frightened a few minutes ago?"

"Oh, mother!" the girl said, "this is a letter from Mr. Roscorla, and he wants me to marry him."

"Mr. Roscorla!" cried the mother, in blank astonishment. "Who ever dreamed of such a thing? and what do you say, Wenna? What do you think? What answer will you send him? Dear me, to think of Mr. Roscorla taking a wife, and wanting to have our Wenna, too!"

She began to tell her mother something of the letter, reading it carefully to herself, and then repeating aloud some brief suggestion of what she had read, to let her mother know what were the arguments that Mr. Roscorla employed. And it was, on the whole, an argumentative letter, and much more calm, and lucid, and reasonable than most letters are which contain offers of marriage. Mr. Roscorla wrote thus:—

"Basset Cottage, Eglosilyan, July 18, 18—.

"My dear Miss Wenna,—I fear that this letter may surprise you, but I hope you will read it through without alarm or indignation, and deal fairly and kindly with what it has to say. Perhaps you will think, when you have read it, that I ought to have come to you and said the things that it says. But I wish to put these things before you in as simple a manner as I can, which is best done by writing; and a letter will have this advantage that you can recur to it at any moment, if there is some point on which you are in doubt.

"The object, then, of this letter is to ask you to become my wife, and to put before you a few considerations which I hope will have some little influence in determining your answer. You will be surprised, no doubt; for though you must be well aware that I could perceive the graces of your character—the gentleness and charity of heart, and modesty of demeanour that have endeared you to the whole of the people among whom you live—you may fairly say that I never betrayed my admiration of you in word or deed, and that is true. I cannot precisely tell you why I should be more distant in manner towards her whom I preferred to all the world than to her immediate friends and associates for whom I cared much less; but such is the fact. I could talk, and joke, and spend a pleasant afternoon in the society of your sister Mabyn, for example; I could ask her to accept a present from me; I could write letters to her when I was in London; but with you all that was different. Perhaps it is because you are so fine and shy, because there is so much sensitiveness in your look, that I have almost been afraid to go near you, lest you should shrink from some rude intimation of that which I now endeavour to break to you gently—my wish and earnest hope that you may become my wife. I trust I have so far explained what perhaps you may have considered coldness on my part.

"I am a good deal older than you are; and I cannot pretend to offer you that fervid passion which, to the imagination of the young, seems the only thing worth living for, and one of the necessary conditions of marriage. On the other hand, I cannot expect the manifestation of any such passion on your side, even if I had any wish for it. But on this point I should like to make a few observations which I hope will convince you that my proposal is not so unreasonable as it may have seemed at first sight. When I look over the list of all my friends who have married, whom do I find to be living the happiest life? Not they who as boy and girl were carried away by a romantic idealism which seldom lasts beyond a few weeks after marriage, but those who had wisely chosen partners fitted to become their constant and affectionate friends. It is this possibility of friendship, indeed, which is the very basis of a happy marriage. The romance and passion of love soon depart; then the man and woman find themselves living in the same house, dependent on each other's character, intelligence, and disposition, and bound by inexorable ties. If, in these circumstances, they can be good friends, it is well with

them. If they admire each other's thoughts and feelings, if they are generously considerate towards each other's weaknesses, if they have pleasure in each other's society—if, in short, they find themselves bound to each other by the ties of a true and disinterested friendship, the world has been good to them. I say nothing against that period of passion which, in some rare and fortunate instances, precedes this infinitely longer period of friendship. You would accuse me of the envy of an elderly man if I denied that it has its romantic aspects. But how very temporary these are! How dangerous they are too! for during this term of hot-headed idealism, the young people have their eyes bewildered, and too often make the most grievous mistake in choosing a partner for life. The passion of a young man, as I have seen it displayed in a thousand instances, is not a thing to be desired. It is cruel in its jealousy, exacting in its demands, heedless in its impetuosity; and when it has burned itself out—when nothing remains but ashes and an empty fireplace—who is to say that the capacity for a firm and lasting friendship will survive? But perhaps you fancy that this passionate love may last for ever. Will you forgive me, dear Miss Wenna, if I say that that is the dream of a girl? In such rare cases as I have seen, this perpetual ardour of love was anything but a happiness to those concerned. The freaks of jealousy on the part of a boy and girl who think of getting married are but occasions for the making of quarrels and the delight of reconciliation; but a life-long jealousy involves a torture to both husband and wife to which death would be preferable."

At this point Morwenna's cheeks burned red; she was silent for a time, and her mother wondered why she skipped so long a passage without saying a word.

"I have used all the opportunities within my reach," the letter continued, "to form a judgment of your character; I know something of my own; and I sincerely believe that we could live a happy and pleasant life together. It is a great sacrifice I ask of you, I own; but you would not find me slow to repay you in gratitude. I am almost alone in the world; the few relatives I have I never see; I have scarcely a friend or acquaintance except those I meet under your father's hospitable roof. I cannot conceal from myself that I should be by far the greater gainer by such a marriage. I should secure for myself a pleasant, intelligent, and amiable companion, who would brighten my home, and in time, I doubt not, soften and sweeten those views of the world that are naturally formed by a middle-aged man living alone and in privacy. What can I offer you in return? Not much—except the opportunity of adding one more to the many good deeds that seem to be the chief occupation of your life. And I should be glad if you would let me help you in that way, and give you the aid of advice which might, perhaps, temper your generosity and apply it to its best uses. You are aware that I have no occupation—and scarcely a hobby; I should make it my occupation, my constant endeavour and pleasure, to win and secure your affection, to make the

ordinary little cares and duties of life, in which you take so great an interest, smooth and pleasant to you. In short, I should try to make you happy; not in any frantic and wild way, but by the exercise of a care, and affection, and guardianship by which I hope we should both profit. May I point out, also, that, as a married woman, you would have much more influence among the poorer families in the village who take up so much of your attention; and you would be removed, too, if I may mention such a thing, from certain unhappy circumstances which I fear trouble you greatly at times. But perhaps I should not have referred to this; I would rather seek to press my claim on the ground of the happiness you would thereby confer on others, which I know to be your chief object in life.

"I have not said half what I intended to say; but I must not fatigue you. Perhaps you will give me an opportunity of telling you personally what I think of yourself, for I cannot bring myself to write it in bald words; and if you should be in doubt, give me the benefit of the doubt, and let me explain. I do not ask you for a hurried answer; but I should be glad if, out of the kindness of all your ways, you would send me one line soon, merely to say that I have not offended you.

"I am, my dear Miss Rosewarne, yours most sincerely,

"RICHARD ROSCORLA."

"Oh! what must I do, mother?" the girl cried. "Is it all true that he says?"

"My dear child, there is a great deal of common sense in the letter," the mother replied, calmly; "but you needn't decide all at once. Take plenty of time. I suppose you don't dislike Mr. Roscorla?"

"Oh, not at all—not at all! But then, to marry him——!"

"If you don't wish to marry him, no harm is done," Mrs. Rosewarne said. "I cannot advise you, Wenna. Your own feelings must settle the question. But you ought to be very proud of the offer, any way; and you must thank him properly; for Mr. Roscorla is a gentleman, although he is not as rich as his relations, and it is a great honour he has done you. Dear me, but I mustn't advise. Of course, Wenna, if you were in love with any one—if there was any young man about here whom you would like to marry—there would be no need for you to be frightened about what Mr. Roscorla says of young folks being in love. It is a trying time, to be sure. It has many troubles. Perhaps, after all, a quiet and peaceful life is better, especially for you, Wenna, for you were always quiet and peaceful, and if any trouble came over you it would break your heart. I think it would be better for you if you were never tried in that way, Wenna."

The girl rose, with a sigh.

"Not that it is my advice, Wenna," said the mother. "But you are of that nature, you see. If you were in love with a young man, you would be his slave. If he ceased to care for you, or were cruel to

you, it would kill you, my dear. Well, you see, here is a man who would be able to take care of you, and of your sister Mabyn, too, if anything happened to your father or me; and he would make much of you, I have no doubt, and be very kind to you. You are not like other girls, Wenna——"

"I know that, mother," said the girl, with a strange sort of smile that just trembled on the verge of tears. "They can't all be as plain as I am."

"Oh, I don't mean that! You make a great mistake if you think that men only care for doll-faces—as Mr. Roscorla says, that fancy does not last long after marriage, and then men begin to ask whether their wives are clever, and amusing, and well-informed, and so on. What I meant was, that most girls could run the gauntlet of that sort of love that Mr. Roscorla describes, and suffer little if they made a mistake. But there's no shell about you, Wenna. You are quite undefended, sensitive, and timid. People are deceived by your quick wit, and your cheerfulness, and your singing. I know better. I know that a careless word may cut you deeply. And dear, dear me, what a terrible time that is when all your life seems to hang on the way a word is spoken!"

The girl crossed over to a small side-table, on which there was a writing-desk.

"But mind, Wenna," said her mother, with a return of anxiety, "mind I don't say that to influence your decision. Don't be influenced by me. Consult your own feelings, dear. You know I think sometimes you undervalue yourself, and think that no one cares about you, and that you have no claim to be thought much of. Well, that is a great mistake, Wenna. You must not throw yourself away through that notion. I wish all the girls about were as clever and good-natured as you. But at the same time, you know, there are few girls I know, and certainly none about here, who would consider it throwing themselves away to marry Mr. Roscorla."

"*Marry Mr. Roscorla!*" a third voice exclaimed, and at the same moment Mabyn Rosewarne entered the room.

She looked at her mother and sister with astonishment. She saw that Wenna was writing, and that she was very pale. She saw a blue-coloured letter lying beside her. Then the proud young beauty understood the situation; and with her to perceive a thing was to act on its suggestion there and then.

"Our Wenna! Marry that old man! Oh, mother! how can you let her do such a thing?"

She walked right over to the small table, with a glow of indignation in her face, and with her lips set firm, and her eyes full of fire; and then she caught up the letter, that had scarcely been begun, and tore it in a thousand pieces, and flung the pieces on to the floor.

"Oh, mother! how could you let her do it? Mr. Roscorla marry our Wenna!"

She took two or three steps up and down the room, in a pretty passion of indignation, and yet trying to keep her proud eyes free from tears.

"Mother, if you do I'll go into a convent! I'll go to sea, and never come back again! I won't stop in the house—not one minute—if Wenna goes away!"

"My dear child," said the mother, patiently, "it is not my doing. You must not be so rash. Mr. Roscorla is not an old man—nothing of the sort; and, if he does offer to marry Wenna, it is a great honour done to her, I think. She ought to be very grateful, as I hope you will be, Mabyn, when any one offers to marry you——"

Miss Mabyn drew herself up; and her pretty mouth lost none of its scorn.

"And as for Wenna," the mother said, "she must judge for herself——"

"Oh, but she's not fit to judge for herself!" broke in the younger sister, impetuously. "She will do anything that anybody wants. She would make herself the slave of anybody. She is always being imposed on. Just wait a moment, and *I* will answer Mr. Roscorla's letter!"

She walked over to the table again, twisted round the writing-desk, and quickly pulled in a chair. You would have thought that the pale, dark-eyed little girl on the other side of the table had no will of her own—that she was in the habit of obeying this beautiful young termagant of a sister of hers; but Miss Mabyn's bursts of impetuosity were no match for the gentle patience and decision that were invariably opposed to them. In this instance Mr. Roscorla was not to be the recipient of a letter which doubtless would have astonished him.

"Mabyn," said her sister Wenna, quietly, "don't be foolish. I must write to Mr. Roscorla—but only to tell him that I have received his letter. Give me the pen. And will you go and ask Mrs. Borlase if she can spare me Jennifer for a quarter of an hour, to go up to Basset Cottage?"

Mabyn rose, silent, disappointed, and obedient, but not subdued. She went off to execute the errand; but as she went she said to herself, with her head very erect, "Before Mr. Roscorla marries our Wenna, I will have a word to say to him."

Meanwhile Wenna Rosewarne, apparently quite calm, but with her hand trembling so that she could hardly hold the pen, wrote her first love-letter. And it ran thus:—

"Trelyon Arms, Tuesday afternoon.

"Dear Mr. Roscorla,—I have received your letter, and you must not think me offended. I will try to send you an answer to-morrow; or perhaps the day after, or perhaps on Friday, I will try to send you an answer to your letter.

"I am yours sincerely,

"Morwenna Rosewarne."

She took it timidly to her mother, who smiled, and said it was a little incoherent.

"But I cannot write it again, mother," the girl said. "Will you give it to Jennifer when she comes?"

Little did Miss Wenna notice of the beautiful golden afternoon that was shining over Eglosilyan as she left the inn and stole away out to the rock at the mouth of the little harbour. She spoke to her many acquaintances as she passed, and could not have told a minute thereafter that she had seen them. She said a word or two to the coastguardsman out at the point—an old friend of hers—and then she went round to the seaward side of the rocks, and sat down to think the whole matter over. The sea was as still as a sea in a dream. There was but one ship visible, away down in the south, a brown speck in a flood of golden haze.

When the first startled feeling was over—when she had recovered from the absolute fright that so sudden a proposal had caused her—there was something of pride and pleasure crept into her heart to know that she was not quite the insignificant person she had fancied herself to be. Was it true, then, what he had said about her being of some use to the people around her? Did they really care for her? Had she really won the respect and approval of a man who had hitherto seemed to her suspicious and censorious?

There flashed upon her some faint picture of herself as a matron, and she found herself blushing and smiling at the same time to think of herself going round the cottages as Mrs. Roscorla, and acting the part of a little married woman. If marriage meant no more than that, she was not afraid of it; on the contrary, the prospect rather pleased her. These were duties she could understand. Marriage, in those idle day-dreams of hers, had seemed to her some vague, and distant, and awful thing; all the romance, and worship, and noble self-surrender of it being far away from a poor little plain person, not capable of inspiring idealism in anybody. But this, on the other hand, seemed easily within her reach. She became rather amused with the picture of herself which she drew as Mrs. Roscorla. Her quick fancy put in little humorous touches here and there, until she found herself pretty nearly laughing at herself as a small married woman. For what did the frank-spoken heroine of that sailor-ballad say to her lover? If he would be faithful and kind,

> Nor your Molly forsake,
> Still your trousers I'll wash, and your grog, too, I'll make.

Mr. Roscorla did wear certain white garments occasionally in summer-time, and very smart he looked in them. As for his grog, would she mix the proper quantities, as they sat together of an evening, by themselves, in that little parlour up at Basset Cottage? And would she have to take his arm as they walked of a Sunday morning to church, up the main street of Eglosilyan, where all her old friends, the children, would be looking at her? And would she some day, with all the airs and counsels of a married woman, have to take Mabyn to her arms and bid the younger sister have confidence, and tell her all the story of her wonder and delight over the new and strange love that had come into her heart? And would

she ask Mabyn to describe her lover; and would she act the ordinary part of an experienced adviser, and bid her be cautious, and ask her to wait until the young man had made a position in the world, and had proved himself prudent and sensible, and of steady mind? Or would she not rather fling her arms round her sister's neck, and bid her go down on her knees and thank God for having made her so beautiful, and bid her cherish as the one good thing in all the world the strong and yearning love and admiration and worship of a young and wondering soul?

Wenna Rosewarne had been amusing herself with these pictures of herself as a married woman; but she was crying all the same; and becoming a little impatient with herself, and perhaps a trifle hysterical, she rose from the rocks and thought she would go home again. She had scarcely turned, however, when she met Mr. Roscorla himself, who had seen her at a distance, and followed her.

CHAPTER IV.

The Last Look Back.

Mr. Roscorla may be recommended to ladies generally, and to married men who are haunted by certain vague and vain regrets, as an excellent example of the evils and vanity of club-life. He was now a man approaching fifty, careful in dress and manner, methodical in habit, and grave of aspect, living out a not over-enjoyable life in a solitary little cottage, and content to go for his society to the good folks of the village inn. But five-and-twenty years before he had been a gay young fellow about town, a pretty general favourite, clever in his way, free with his money, and possessed of excellent spirits. He was not very wealthy, to be sure; his father had left him certain shares in some sugar-plantations in Jamaica, but the returns periodically forwarded to him by his agents were sufficient for his immediate wants. He had few cares, and he seemed on the whole to have a pleasant time of it. On disengaged evenings he lounged about his club, and dined with one or other of the men he knew, and then he played billiards till bed-time. Or he would have nice little dinner-parties at his rooms; and, after the men had changed their coats, would have a few games at whist, perhaps finishing up with a little spurt of unlimited loo. In the season he went to balls, and dinners, and parties of all sorts, singling out a few families with pretty daughters for his special attentions, but careful never to commit himself. When every one went from town he went too, and in the autumn and winter months he had a fair amount of shooting and hunting, guns and horses alike and willingly furnished by his friends.

Once, indeed, he had taken a fancy that he ought to do something, and he went and read law a bit, and ate some dinners, and got called to the Bar. He even went the length of going on Circuit; but either he travelled by coach, or fraternised with a solicitor, or did something

objectionable: at all events his Circuit mess fined him: he refused to pay the fine, threw the whole thing up, and returned to his club, and its carefully-ordered dinners, and its friendly game of sixpenny and eighteen-penny pool.

Of course he dressed, and acted, and spoke just as his fellows did, and gradually from the common talk of smoking-rooms imbibed a vast amount of nonsense. He knew that such and such a statesman professed particular opinions only to keep in place and enjoy the loaves and fishes. He could tell you to a penny the bribe given to the editor of the *Times* by a foreign Government for a certain series of articles. As for the stories he heard and repeated of all manner of noble families, they were many of them doubtless true, and they were nearly all unpleasant; but then the tale that would have been regarded with indifference if told about an ordinary person, grew lambent with interest when it was told about a commonplace woman possessed of a shire and a gaby crowned with a coronet. There was no malice in these stories; only the young men were supposed to know everything about the private affairs of a certain number of families no more nearly related to them than their washerwoman.

He was unfortunate, too, in a few personal experiences. He was a fairly well-intentioned young man, and, going home one night, was moved to pity by the sobbing and exclamations of a little girl of twelve, whose mother was drunk and tumbling about the pavement. The child could not get her mother to go home, and it was now past midnight. Richard Roscorla thought he would interfere, and went over the way and helped the woman to her feet. He had scarcely done so when the virago turned on him, shouted for help, accused him of assaulting her, and finally hit him straight between the eyes, nearly blinding him, and causing him to keep his chambers for three weeks, After that he gave up the lower classes.

Then a gentleman who had been his bosom friend at Eton, and who had carried away with him so little of the atmosphere of that institution that he by-and-by abandoned himself to trade, renewed his acquaintance with Mr. Roscorla, and besought him to join him in a little business transaction. He only wanted a few thousand pounds to secure the success of a venture that would make both their fortunes. Young Roscorla hesitated. Then his friend sent his wife, an exceedingly pretty woman, and she pleaded with such sweetness and pathos that she actually carried away a cheque for the amount in her beautiful little purse. A couple of days after Mr. Roscorla discovered that his friend had suddenly left the country; that he had induced a good many people to lend him money to start his new enterprise; and that the beautiful lady whom he had sent to plead his cause was a wife certainly, but not his wife. She was, in fact, the wife of one of the swindled creditors, who bore her loss with greater equanimity than he showed in speaking of his departed money. Young Roscorla laughed, and said to himself that a man who wished to have any knowledge of the world must be prepared to pay for it.

The loss of the money, though it pressed him hardly for a few years, and gave a fright to his father's executors, did not trouble him much; for, in company with a good many of the young fellows about, he had given himself up to one of the most pleasing delusions which even club-life has fostered. It was the belief of those young men that in England there are a vast number of young ladies of fortune who are so exceedingly anxious to get married, that any decent young fellow of fair appearance and good manners has only to bide his time in order to be provided for for life. Accordingly Mr. Roscorla and others of his particular set were in no hurry to take a wife. They waited to see who would bid most for them. They were not in want; they could have maintained a wife in a certain fashion; but that was not the fashion in which they hoped to spend the rest of their days, when they consented to relinquish the joys and freedom of bachelorhood. Most of them, indeed, had so thoroughly settled in their own mind the sort of existence to which they were entitled—the house, and horses, and shooting necessary to them—that it was impossible for them to consider any lesser offer; and so they waited from year to year, guarding themselves against temptation, cultivating an excellent taste in various sorts of luxuries, and reserving themselves for the *grand coup* which was to make their fortune. In many cases they looked upon themselves as the victims of the world. They had been deceived by this or the other woman; but now they had done with the fatal passion of love, its dangerous perplexities, and insincere romance; and were resolved to take a sound common-sense view of life. So they waited carelessly, and enjoyed their time, growing in wisdom of a certain sort. They were gentlemanly young fellows enough; they would not have done a dishonourable action for the world; they were well-bred, and would have said no discourteous thing to the woman they married, even though they hated her; they had their cold bath every morning; they lived soberly, if not very righteously; and would not have asked ten points at billiards if they fairly thought they could have played even. The only thing was that they had changed their sex. They were not Perseus, but Andromeda; and while this poor masculine Andromeda remained chained to the rock of an imaginary poverty, the feminine Perseus who was to come in a blaze of jewels and gold to the rescue, still remained afar off, until Andromeda got a little tired.

And so it was with Mr. Richard Roscorla. He lounged about his club, and had nice little dinners; he went to other people's houses, and dined there; with his crush-hat under his arm he went to many a dance, and made such acquaintances as he might; but somehow that one supreme chance invariably missed. He did not notice it, any more than his fellows. If you had asked any of them, they would still have given you those devil-may-care opinions about women, and those shrewd estimates of what was worth living for in the world. They did not seem to be aware that year after year was going by, and that a new race of younger men were coming to the front, eager for all sorts of pastimes,

ready to dance till daybreak, and defying with their splendid constitutions the worst champagne a confectioner ever brewed. A man who takes good care of himself is slow to believe that he is growing middle-aged. If the sitting up all night to play loo does him an injury such as he would not have experienced a few years before, he lays the blame of it on the brandy-and-soda. When two or three hours over wet turnips make his knees feel queer, he vows that he is in bad condition, but that a few days' exercise will set him right. It was a long time before Mr. Richard Roscorla would admit to himself that his hair was growing grey. By this time many of his old friends and associates had left the club. Some had died; some had made the best of a bad bargain, and married a plain country cousin; none, to tell the truth, had been rescued by the beautiful heiress for whom they had all been previously waiting. And while these men went away, and while new men came into the club—young fellows with fresh complexions, abundant spirits, a lavish disregard of money, and an amazing enjoyment in drinking any sort of wine—another set of circumstances came into play which rendered it more and more necessary for Mr. Roscorla to change his ways of life.

He was now over forty; his hair was grey; his companions were mostly older men than himself; and he began to be rather pressed for money. The merchants in London who sold for his agents in Jamaica those consignments of sugar and rum sent him every few months statements which showed that either the estates were yielding less, or the markets had fallen, or labour had risen—whatever it might be, his annual income was very seriously impaired. He could no longer afford to play half-crown points at whist: even sixpenny pool was dangerous; and those boxes and stalls which it was once his privilege to take for dowagers gifted with daughters, were altogether out of the question. The rent of his rooms in Jermyn Street was a serious matter; all his little economies at the club were of little avail; at last he resolved to leave London. And then it was that he bethought him of living permanently at this cottage at Eglosilyan, which had belonged to his grandfather, and which he had visited from time to time during the summer months. He would continue his club-subscription; he would still correspond with certain of his friends; he would occasionally pay a flying visit to London; and down here by the Cornish coast he would live a healthy, economical, contented life.

So he came to Eglosilyan, and took up his abode in the plain white cottage placed amid birch-trees on the side of the hill, and set about providing himself with amusement. He had a good many books, and he read at night over his final pipe; he made friends with the fishermen, and often went out with them; he took a little interest in wild plants; and he rode a sturdy little pony by way of exercise. He was known to the Trelyons, to the clergymen of the neighbourhood, and to one or two families living farther off; but he did not dine out much, for he could not well invite his host to dinner in return. His chief friends, indeed, were

the Rosewarnes; and scarcely a day passed that he did not call at the inn and have a chat with George Rosewarne, or with his wife and daughters. For the rest, Mr. Roscorla was a small man, sparely built, with somewhat fresh complexion, close-cropped grey hair and iron-grey whiskers. He dressed very neatly and methodically; he was fairly light and active in his walk; and he had a grave, good-natured smile. He was much improved in constitution, indeed, since he came to Eglosilyan; for that was not a place to let any one die of languor, or to encourage complexions of the colour of apple-pudding. Mr. Roscorla, indeed, had the appearance of a pleasant little country lawyer, somewhat finical in dress and grave in manner, and occasionally just a trifle supercilious and cutting in his speech.

He had received Wenna Rosewarne's brief and hurriedly-written note; and if accident had not thrown her in his way, he would doubtless have granted her that time for reflection which she demanded. But happening to be out, he saw her go down towards the rocks beyond the harbour. She had a pretty figure, and she walked gracefully; when he saw her at a distance some little flutter of anxiety disturbed his heart. That glimpse of her—the possibility of securing as his constant companion a girl who walked so daintily and dressed so neatly—added some little warmth of feeling to the wish he had carefully reasoned out and expressed. For the offer he had sent to Miss Wenna was the result of much calculation. He was half aware that he had let his youth slip by and idled away his opportunities; there was now no chance of his engaging in any profession or pursuit; there was little chance of his bettering his condition by a rich marriage. What could he now offer to a beautiful young creature possessed of fortune such as he had often looked out for, in return for herself and her money? Not his grey hairs, and his asthmatic evenings in winter, and the fixed, and narrow, and oftentimes selfish habits and opinions begotten of a solitary life. Here, on the other hand, was a young lady of pleasing manners and honest nature, and of humble wishes as became her station, whom he might induce to marry him. She had scarcely ever moved out of the small circle around her; and in it were no possible lovers for her. If he did not marry her, she might drift into as hopeless a position as his own. If she consented to marry him, would they not be able to live in a friendly way together, gradually winning each other's sympathy, and making the world a little more sociable and comfortable for both? There was no chance of his going back to the brilliant society in which he had once moved; for there was no one whom he could expect to die and leave him any money. When he went up to town and spent an evening or two at his club, he found himself among strangers; and he could not get that satisfaction out of a solitary dinner that once was his. He returned to his cottage at Eglosilyan with some degree of resignation; and fancied he could live well enough there if Wenna Rosewarne would only come to relieve him from its frightful loneliness.

He blushed when he went forward to her on these rocks, and was exceedingly embarrassed, and could scarcely look her in the face as he begged her pardon for intruding on her, and hoped she would resume her seat. She was a little pale, and would have liked to get away, but was probably so frightened that she did not know how to take the step. Without a word, she sat down again, her heart beating as if it would suffocate her. Then there was a terrible pause.

Mr. Roscorla discovered at this moment—and the shock almost bewildered him—that he would have to play the part of a lover. He had left that out of the question. He had found it easy to dissociate love from marriage in writing a letter; in fact he had written it mainly to get over the necessity of shamming sentiment, but here was a young and sensitive girl, probably with a good deal of romantic nonsense in her head, and he was going to ask her to marry him. And just at this moment, also, a terrible recollection flashed in on his mind of Wenna Rosewarne's liking for humour, and of the merry light he had often seen in her eyes, however demure her manner might be; and then it occurred to him that if he did play the lover, she would know that he knew he was making a fool of himself, and laugh at him in the safe concealment of her own room.

"Of course," he said, making a sudden plunge, followed by a gasp or two—"Of course—Miss Wenna—of course you were surprised to get my letter—a letter containing an offer of marriage, and almost nothing about affection in it. Well, there are some things one can neither write nor say—they have so often been the subject of good-natured ridicule that, that——"

"I think one forgets that," Wenna said timidly, "if one is in earnest about anything."

"Oh, I know it is no laughing matter," he said hastily, and conscious that he was becoming more and more commonplace. Oh! for one happy inspiration from some half-remembered drama—a mere line of poetry even! He felt as if he were in court opening a dreary case, uncertain as to the points of his brief, and fearing that the judge was beginning to show impatience.

"Miss Wenna," he said, "you know I find it very difficult to say what I should like to say. That letter did not tell you half—probably you thought it too dry and business-like. But at all events you were not offended?"

"Oh, no," she said, wondering how she could get away, and whether a precipitate plunge into the sea below her would not be the simplest plan. Her head, she felt, was growing giddy, and she began to hear snatches of "Wapping Old Stairs" in the roar of the waves around her.

"And of course you will think me unfair and precipitate in not giving you more time—if I ask you just now whether I may hope that your answer will be favourable. You must put it down to my anxiety; and although you may be inclined to laugh at that——"

"Oh, no, Mr. Roscorla," she said, with her eyes still looking down.

"Well, at all events, you won't think that I was saying anything I didn't believe, merely to back up my own case in that letter. I do believe it—I wish I could convince you as I certainly know time would convince you. I have seen a great deal of that wild passion which romance-writers talk about as a fine thing—I have seen a great deal of it in circles where it got full play, because the people were not restrained by the hard exigencies of life, and had little else to think about than falling in love and getting out of it again. I would not sadden you by telling you what I have seen as the general and principal results. The tragedies I have witnessed of the young fellows whose lives have been ruined—the women who have been disgraced and turned out into the world broken-hearted—why I dare not sully your imagination with such stories; but any one who has had experience of men and women, and known intimately the histories of a few families, would corroborate me."

He spoke earnestly; he really believed what he said. But he did not explain to her that his knowledge of life was chiefly derived from the confidences of a few young men of indifferent morals, small brains, and abundant money. He had himself, by the way, been hit. For one brief year of madness he had given himself up to an infatuation for somebody or other, until his eyes were opened to his folly, and he awoke to find himself a sufferer in health and purse, and the object of the laughter of his friends. But all that was an addition to his stock of knowledge of the world. He grew more and more wise; and was content to have paid for his wisdom.

"My knowledge of these things may have made me suspicious," he continued, "and very often I have seen that you considered me unjust to people whom you knew. Well, you like missionary work, Miss Wenna, and I am anxious to be converted. No—no—don't imagine I press you for an answer just now, I am merely adding a little to my letter."

"But you know, Mr. Roscorla," the girl said, with a meekness that seemed to have no sarcasm in it—"you know you have often remonstrated with me about my missionary work. You have tried to make me believe that I was doing wrongly in giving away little charities that I could afford. Also, that I had a superstition about self-sacrifice—although I am sure I don't consider myself sacrificed."

He was a little embarrassed, but he said in an off-hand way:—

"Well, speaking generally, that is what I think. I think you should consider yourself a little bit. Your health and comfort are of as great importance as anybody's in Eglosilyan; and all that teaching and nursing—why don't the people do it for themselves? But then, don't you see, Miss Wenna, I am willing to be converted on all these points?"

It occurred to Wenna Rosewarne at this moment that a harsh person might think that Mr. Roscorla only wanted her to give up sacrificing herself to the people of Eglosilyan, that she might sacrifice herself to him. And somehow there floated into her mind a suggestion of Molly's duties—of the washing of clothes and the mixing of grog—and for the life of her she could not repress a smile. And then she grew mightily embarrassed;

for Mr. Roscorla had perceived that smile, and she fancied he might be hurt, and with that she proceeded to assure him with much earnestness that doing good to others, in as far as she could, was in her case really and truly the blackest form of selfishness, that she did it only to please herself, and that the praises in his letter to her, and his notions as to what the people thought of her, were altogether uncalled-for and wrong.

But here Mr. Roscorla got an opening, and made use of it dexterously. For Miss Wenna's weak side was a great distrust of herself, and a longing to be assured that she was cared for by anybody, and of some little account in the world. To tell her that the people of Eglosilyan were without exception fond of her, and ready at all moments to say kind things of her, was the sweetest flattery to her ears. Mr. Roscorla easily perceived this, and made excellent use of his discovery. If she did not quite believe all that she heard, she was secretly delighted to hear it. It hinted at the possible realisation of all her dreams, even though she could never be beautiful, rich, and of noble presence. Wenna's heart rather inclined to her companion just then. He seemed to her to be a connecting link between her and her manifold friends in Eglosilyan; for how had he heard those things, which she had not heard, if he were not in general communication with them? He seemed to her, too, a friendly counsellor on whom she could rely; he was the very first, indeed, who had ever offered to help her in her work.

Mr. Roscorla, glad to see that he was getting on so well, grew reckless somewhat and fell into a grievous blunder. He fancied that a subtle sort of flattery to her would be conveyed by some hinted depreciation of her sister Mabyn. Alas! at the first suggestion of it, all the pleased friendliness of her face instantly vanished, and she looked at him only with a stare of surprise. He saw his error. He retreated from that dangerous ground precipitately; but it needed a good deal of assiduous labour before he had talked her into a good humour again.

He did not urge his suit in direct terms. But surely, he said to himself, it means much if a girl allows you to talk in the most roundabout way of a proposal of marriage which you have made to her, without sending you off point-blank. Surely she was at least willing to be convinced or persuaded. Certainly, Miss Wenna could not very well get away without appearing to be rude; but at the same time she showed no wish to get away. On the contrary, she talked with him in a desultory and timid fashion, her eyes cast down, and her fingers twisting bits of sea-pink, and she listened with much attention to all his descriptions of the happy life led by people who knew how to be good friends.

"It is far more a matter of intention than of temper," he said. "When once two people find out the good qualities in each other, they should fix their faith on those, and let the others be overlooked as much as possible. With a little consideration, the worst of tempers can be managed; but to meet temper with temper——! And then each of them should remember, supposing that the other is manifestly wrong at this particular moment,

that he or she is likely to be wrong at some other time. But I don't think there is much to be feared from your temper, Miss Wenna; and as for mine—I suppose I get vexed sometimes, like other people, but I don't think I am bad-tempered, and I am sure I should never be bad-tempered to you. I don't think I should readily forget what I owe you for taking pity on a solitary old fellow like myself, if I can only persuade you to do that, and for being content to live a humdrum life up in that small cottage. By the way, do you like riding, Wenna? Has your father got a lady's saddle?"

The question startled her so that the blood rushed to her face in a moment, and she could not answer. Was it not that very morning that she had been asked almost the same question by Mr. Trelyon? And while she was dreamily looking at an imaginative picture of her future life, calm and placid and commonplace, the sudden introduction into it of Harry Trelyon almost frightened her. The mere recalling of his name, indeed, shattered that magic-lantern slide, and took her back to their parting of the forenoon, when he left her in something of an angry fashion; or rather it took her still further back—to one bright summer morning on which she had met young Trelyon riding over the downs to St. Gennis. We all of us know how apt the mind is to retain one particular impression of a friend's appearance, sometimes even in the matter of dress and occupation. When we recall such and such a person, we think of a particular smile, a particular look; perhaps one particular incident of his or her life. Whenever Wenna Rosewarne thought of Mr. Trelyon, she thought of him as she saw him on that one morning. She was coming along the rough path that crosses the bare uplands by the sea; he was riding by another path some little distance off, and did not notice her. The boy was riding hard; the sunlight was on his face. He was singing aloud some song about the Cavaliers and King Charles. Two or three years had come and gone since then. She had seen Master Harry in many a mood, and not unfrequently ill-tempered and sulky; but whenever she thought of him suddenly, her memory presented her with that picture; and it was a picture of a handsome English lad riding by on a summer morning, singing a brave song, and with all the light of youth, and hope, and courage shining on his face.

She rose quickly, and with a sigh, as if she had been dreaming for a time, and forgetting for a moment the sadness of the world.

"Oh, you asked about a saddle," she said in a matter-of-fact way. "Yes, I think my father has one. I think I must be going home now, Mr. Roscorla."

"No, not yet," he said in a pleading way. "Give me a few more minutes. I mayn't have another chance before you make up your mind; and then, when that is done, I suppose it is all over, so far as persuasion goes. What I am most anxious about is that you should believe there is more affection in my offer than I have actually conveyed in words. Don't imagine it is merely a commonplace bargain I want you to enter into. I

hope, indeed, that in time I shall win from you something warmer than affection, if only you give me the chance. Now, Wenna, won't you give me some word of assurance—some hint that it may come all right?"

She stood before him, with her eyes cast down, and remained silent for what seemed to him a strangely long time. Was she bidding good-by to all the romantic dreams of her youth—to that craving in a girl's heart for some firm and sure ideal of manly love, and courage, and devotion to which she can cling through good report and bad report? Was she reconciling herself to the plain and common ways of the married life placed before her? She said at length, in a low voice:

"You won't ask me to leave Eglosilyan?"

"Certainly not," he said, eagerly. "And you will see how I will try to join you in all your work there, and how much easier and pleasanter it will be for you, and how much more satisfactory for all the people around you."

She put out her hand timidly, her eyes still cast down.

"You will be my wife, Wenna?"

"Yes," she said.

Mr. Roscorla was conscious that he ought at this supreme moment in a man's life to experience a strange thrill of happiness. He almost waited for it; but he felt instead a very distinct sense of embarrassment in not knowing what to do or say next. He supposed that he ought to kiss her, but he dared not. As he himself had said, Wenna Rosewarne was so fine and shy that he shrank from wounding her extreme sensitiveness, and to step forward and kiss this small and gentle creature, who stood there with her pale face faintly flushed and her eyes averted—why, it was impossible. He had heard of girls, in wild moments of pleasure and persuasion, suddenly raising their tear-filled eyes to their lovers' face, and signing away their whole existence with one full, passionate, and yearning kiss. But to steal a kiss from this calm little girl! He felt he should be acting the part of a jocular ploughboy.

"Wenna," he said at length, "you have made me very happy. I am sure you will never repent your decision; at least I shall do my best to make you think you have done right. And, Wenna, I have to dine with the Trelyons on Friday evening; would you allow me to tell them something of what has happened?"

"The Trelyons!" she repeated, looking up in a startled way.

It was of evil omen for this man's happiness that the mere mention of that word turned this girl, who had just been yielding up her life to him, into a woman as obdurate and unimpressionable as a piece of marble.

"Mr. Roscorla," she said, with a certain hard decision of voice, "I must ask you to give me back that promise I made. I forgot—it was too hurried; why would you not wait?"

He was fairly stupefied.

"Mr. Roscorla," she said, with almost something of petulant im-

patience in her voice, "you must let me go now; I am quite tired out. I will write to you to-morrow or next day, as I promised."

She passed him and went on, leaving him unable to utter a word of protest. But she had only gone a few steps when she returned, and held out her hand, and said:

"I hope I have not offended you? It seems that I must offend everybody now; but I am a little tired, Mr. Roscorla."

There was just the least quiver about her lips; and as all this was a profound mystery to him, he fancied he must have tired her out, and he inwardly called himself a brute.

"My dear Wenna," he said, "you have not offended me—you have not really. It is I who must apologize to you. I am so sorry I should have worried you; it was very inconsiderate. Pray take your own time about that letter."

So she went away, and passed round to the other side of the rocks, and came in view of the small winding harbour, and the mill, and the inn. Far away up there, over the cliffs, were the downs on which she had met Harry Trelyon that summer morning, as he rode by, singing in the mere joyousness of youth, and happy and pleased with all the world. She could hear the song he was singing then; she could see the sunlight that was shining on his face. It appeared to her to be long ago. This girl was but eighteen years of age, and yet, as she walked down towards Eglosilyan, there was a weight on her heart that seemed to tell her she was growing old.

And now the western sky was red with the sunset, and the rich light burned along the crests of the hills, on the golden furze, the purple heather, and the deep-coloured rocks. The world seemed all ablaze up there; but down here, as she went by the harbour and crossed over the bridge by the mill, Eglosilyan lay pale and grey in the hollow; and even the great black wheel was silent.

St. Thomas.

From Trebizond, Asia Minor, Turkey, to St. Thomas, Danish Antilles, West Indies, is a distance of one hundred and six geographical degrees of longitude West, and of twenty-four degrees of latitude South; besides some odd minutes, the exact number of which may be determined by reference, say, to Keith Johnston's "Royal Atlas." Not a full third of the circumference of the globe in one direction, and little more than a ninth in the other. But insignificant as these distances may appear on a map, especially one of Mercator's delusive projection, they are in reality immense. Their true measurement is not by miles, but by centuries; not by geographical, but by cosmical lines; by those, in fact, that divide the oldest of the Old World from the newest of the New.

With Xenophon and Arrian for its chroniclers, broken Roman sculptures and crumbling Byzantine walls for its memorials, Pontic tombs excavated in its rocks, and the mosque in which Mahomet the Conqueror said his thanksgiving prayer, the Te Deum of Islam, crowning its heights, Trebizond is old enough in all conscience; nor do its wide-trousered, cross-legged shopkeepers, its veiled women, its mangy dogs, and its dark patches of cypress grove over Turkish-lettered tombstones, each inscribed with "He is the Eternal," suggest much idea of change. Indeed, its extreme easterly, that is most out-of-the-way, position in the most unprogressive of all empires, that is Turkey, might alone furnish sufficient warrant that the refuge of the Ten Thousand is in no imminent danger of becoming modernised. Nor is it; my word for the fact.

Sunrise may be never so lovely, but sunset moves us more; and a farewell to the old calls up a deeper response in our nature than a welcome to the young. I have left it, amid the chill grey shades of an April evening, the late almost wintry April of those regions; and I have no wish to see again that still, mist-shrouded line of mountain-cape and dark forest; no desire to climb again that rock-hewn ascent, to tread those rough-paven streets, and receive the obsequious salaams of the wide-robed, bearded inhabitants, who rise up Eastern fashion to greet the official badge as it passes by.

The British lion and unicorn have disappeared from over the door of my little garden-surrounded house; Turkish children, very dirty, I make no doubt (for the laws of ablution do not seem obligatory on the juvenile faithful), play about the entrance. Turkish slippers strew the hall; against the latticed windows of what was once my sitting room, now transformed—a most poetic, most prosaic, thought!—into a Turkish harem

apartment, moon-faced Turkish beauties flatten their lovely noses, as they gaze, if they care to do so, on the grey Byzantine walls of the Comnenian fortress across the opposite ravine. My negro groom, the best gereed-player in the province, has, I hear, settled down into the quiet proprietor of a small coffee-house by the beach; my Turkoman attendants have transferred the pistols and daggers with which they loved to skewer their voluminous waist-bands to the service of other masters. Town, castle, market-place, inhabitants, house, garden, friends, dependants, all have retreated into the lessening proportions of remote perspective; new figures, new landscapes, thrust them daily further and further off across the gulf of life-long distance and separation. Yet they have each and all of them an abiding place in not ungrateful recollection, and a good wish for the long and undisturbed continuance of their contented stagnation; from the Tatar-eyed, wool-capped driver who lounges purposeless in the miry Meidan beside his crouching camel, to the drowsy pasha who languidly extends a be-ringed hand for the scrap of dirty paper on which is scrawled, for the fiftieth time, the long-unanswered petition. They all belong, more than they themselves know, to the world's great past; and the past, be it what it may, has in it a charm denied to the present. "Say not," vainly preaches the old Chaldæanised rabbi who has assumed the name, but not, if scholars are right, the style and dialect of the Son of David, "say not thou what is the cause that the former days were better than these." Why not? most venerable Babylonian. Is it that the former days were in reality no better than the present, rather worse? That a six-pound franchise is in very fact an improvement, penny papers a gain, and steam-engines a blessing? Or is it that the old printingless, steamless, Bright and Gladstoneless times were really the best? and the cry of "God Save King Solomon!" more to the purpose than the triumphant shout of a Beales and a Beales-led multitude over the demolished railings of Hyde Park? Truly I know not, nor perhaps did either the Hebrew Chaldæan moraliser. Let us take the world as we find it; speed, however regretfully, the parting guest; and get ready a cheerful countenance, as best we may, to greet the coming.

Farewell, then, the Old World, and welcome the New; nay, even the newest of the new, West Indian St. Thomas. No chroniclers need we consult here, for there is next to nothing to chronicle; no voluminous historical records, where there is hardly any history to record. Scarce visited towards the close of his career by Columbus, scornfully abandoned by Spain, that only just condescended to bestow on them from a distance the title of "Virgin," equivalent in this particular instance, I suppose, to "Barren," Islands, these smallest, driest, rockiest of the diminutive, rocky, arid, lesser Antilles remained for a century and a half after the mighty world-seeker had turned away from them wholly untenanted, or at best the chance resting-place of buccaneering adventurers, unannexed by any nationality, unsheltered by any flag. The very Caribs, the questionable authors of some undeciphered scratchings on a sea-side cliff or

two, had left them; and no European, no African, had cared to enter on the abandoned heritage. So late as 1650 St. Thomas lay as unclaimed by any of the respectabilities of the world as Oliver Twist, or Ginx's Baby at the workhouse door—better off, indeed, than those remarkable infants, in that it was already possessed somehow of a name, the identical one that it yet bears; though who conferred on it that distinction has remained an unanswered question in the catechism of history.

At last—it was in A.D. 1657—those most sedentary, most erratic of mortals, the Dutch, tentatively anchored their broad-built ships in the best of West Indian harbours, and took possession for their own of the forty square miles of rock in the centre of which that harbour is set like a green-blue turquoise in a rusty iron ring. Ten years Dutch bales lumbered the beach; and Dutch merchant sailors, under an embryo Dutch Government, sat meditative beside. But after much consumption of tobacco, scheedam, and thought in the monotonous contemplation of dried-up bushes and brown rock, the Hollanders came to the conclusion that Java, Ceylon, and the Eastern Indies offered better investments for their painstaking enterprise than the Western; and in 1667 the gallant Batavian tubs sailed slowly but not reluctantly away, just as the semi-piratical flag of St. George and merry England speckled the offing of St. Thomas.

So the island changed masters, and the "oath of British commerce" replaced awhile the corresponding guttural expletives of Dutch trade. But the quicker workings of the English brain, the naturally sluggish Teutonic fibre of which is, as no less an authority than Mr. Matthew Arnold assures us, abnormally stimulated into incongruous activity by a lucky aspersion of brisker Celtic blood, required scarce five years to solve the problem that the Batavian intellect had with difficulty accomplished in ten. Like their predecessors, however, the new-comers solved it with a negative—a mistaken solution, as subsequent events have proved—and in 1671 the British ensign too fluttered off to larger and more fertile isles.

"*Tarde venientibus ossa*" is a hemistich not less applicable to the great banquet that Nature spreads before her children, than to the monkish refectory of the middle ages. Thus it was with the West Indies, where the late-arriving Danes, long after the more enterprising first-comers, Spanish, English, and French, had divided among themselves every fleshy tit-bit, were fain to put up with the scraggy virginal bones of the least among the lesser Antilles for their share. Of St. Croix, popularly known as Santa Cruz, an island larger and of better promise than St. Thomas, to the south of which it lies at a distance of about forty miles, these Scandinavian Berserkers—to borrow a flower of nomenclature from popular rhetoric—had indeed already, after a sharp struggle with Spanish and French rivals, taken possession; and now, in 1672, seeing St. Thomas absolutely vacant, and a first-rate harbour, if nothing else, ready to hand, they appropriated the Dutch-and-English-deserted island.

I do not envy the feelings of his Excellency the gallant Iversen when

welcomed as the first Danish governor over forty square miles of volcanic rock by the only surviving inhabitants, the melancholy wood-pigeons and sinister land-crabs, of St. Thomas. Nor do I envy the negro slaves who first toiled at clearing bush and levelling stony ground enough to make space for the diminutive square fort and incipient town of "Charlotte-Amalia." Let us hope that Mark Tapley's mantle descended by some fortunate anachronism on Danes and Africans alike, and enwrapped them in a double fold of jollity as they took possession of their new isle of Eden in its dark-purple sphere of sea.

Sixty years have passed, and half Danish half Dutch—for the persevering Hollanders had returned to their first love, but this time under the unassuming guise of a trading Brandenburg company—St. Thomas uneventfully carries on its little trade with its wealthier neighbours, besides affording a convenient shelter in its harbour to storm-driven ships, and a place of refit to the damaged victims of the West Indian cyclones. This avowedly: perhaps, too, not a little business was done, though less openly, in the wrecking, smuggling, privateering, and buccaneering lines; for besides the principal harbour there is many a deep calm creek and quiet cove in the island where a cargo could be landed, a bargain struck, or a sloop equipped without any need of incurring the troublesome enquiries of "whence and whither," where flags and titles might pass unquestioned, and mutual profit hoodwink the Argus eyes of any over-prying official. And if Frenchmen, Spaniards, or even English suffered by these little transactions, were they not at liberty to go and do likewise on their own account? It was the good old West Indian usage, and international law had not yet found a passage to the Caribbean archipelago. Such were the occupations of merchants and traders; meanwhile other colonists busied themselves with less venturesome pursuits on land, and the scanty soil of St. Thomas was cajoled, by dint of care and hard labour, into yielding a modicum of sugar, though surpassed in this respect by its sister island called of St. John. A narrow arm of sea, so narrow that an Enfield rifle would easily select and reach its victim across the rippling strait, divides or unites the fronting coasts. Each at this time owned a dense slave-population, regarded by the comparatively small caste of colonists and planters much as the Israelites of old were by their Egyptian taskmasters, and ruled over by a penal code of more than Pharaonic atrocity. But in 1778 the sight of their own increasing numbers quickened the long-stifled exasperation of the Africans into a hope of revenge, and a revolt was concerted between the bondsmen of either island. Ineffective in St. Thomas, it broke out with deadly result among the wilder mountains of St. John; the little Danish garrison, taken by surprise, was soon cut to pieces, and the island lay at the mercy of the negroes, who, having never experienced any themselves, now showed none. Every house was burnt, every estate ravaged, every white man fled or perished; and through all the blood-stained catalogue which enumerates earth's wrong avenged by wrong, infamous oppression, and mad retaliation, few pages are redder than these.

For six months the insurgents held out against the forces sent against them from St. Thomas, till at last, after many vicissitudes of savage warfare, French assistance, invoked from the neighbouring islands by the panic-stricken Danes, turned the scale in the favour of European skill; the Africans were reduced not to submission but to suicide, and four hundred self-slain corpses were found by the victorious whites on one spot alone. And in truth those, happily the greater number, of the vanquished who thus opened for themselves with their own hands that only sure gate of freedom, death, did wisely and well; their less fortunate prisoner-comrades did not pass that gate till after tortures that few writers now would dare so much as to describe. Eastern Governments, Mahometan caliphs, and sultans have been accused, and not altogether unjustly, of frequent and wanton cruelty; but no Arab, Turk, or even Persian but would have shrunk back aghast from the cold-blooded, torment-devising atrocity of the triumphant Dutch and Danish slaveowners. The awful hurricane that a few weeks later devastated the island of St. Thomas could not with all its rain-torrents wash out the red stains of those hideous executions.

Thirty years more passed unrecorded for good or evil alike; till in 1764 the Royal Edict of Copenhagen that rendered the harbour of St. Thomas a free port inaugurated a new era—that of commerce, merchandise, and prosperity.

Followed the struggle of the New World, then awaking, province after province, into self-consciousness and independent life; and the Danish island, neutral, central, and marked out by Nature herself as the one haven of refuge for the countless sails that speckle these tornado-swept seas, reaped directly and indirectly a full and ever-increasing share of the golden harvest that was being planted the while on other lands in the blood of the labourers. The resort of countless cruisers, half privateer, half pirate; the mart of men who, under colour of serving national interests, advanced their own; the favourite exchange for shoddy supply contracts; the chartered meet for unscrupulous speculators in dubious prizes and blockade-runnings, St. Thomas soon acquired a new importance; and with it a character that, however disguised or modified by more orderly times, and the necessity of cloaking illegal gains under forms of law, has never wholly left the place.

Soon after the American war, the revolutionary shock that upset so many European thrones made itself felt through their far-off dependencies in the Caribbean Sea; and St. Thomas came in among the rest for a share in the vicissitudes of which Denmark had so large and so disastrous a part. For a short time in 1801, and again in 1807, England held with a careless grasp a post the commercial value of which she might have easily estimated from the flourishing condition in which she found it; but blind in 1815, as on so many other occasions, to her own best interests, she a third time abandoned it, as she had first done when it was a mere barren rock a hundred and fifty years before; and the white cross "Dannebrog" again floated over fort and harbour.

From that date to the present, the annals of St. Thomas are made up of export, import, commissions, smuggling, bill-broking, discounting, pilfering, and the ordinary vicissitudes of credit-commerce conducted on the unstable basis of New-World speculation. Meanwhile, the emancipation of slaves, tardily wrung from, rather than conceded by, their Danish masters in 1848, gave the finishing stroke to the already declining sugar cultivation of the island; for what human being, however black, would, if his own free choice were given him, remain to toil at the lowest possible wages on the estates of a planter, while a single day's work among the shipping in the harbour might bring him higher gains than a whole week of spade and hoe? Negroes are not far-sighted, but have ordinarily a remarkably acute vision for what lies immediately before their ugly flat noses. So the canes, which nothing but high-pressure slave-labour could ever possibly have made a paying crop of in this uncongenial soil, disappeared as if by enchantment, to be replaced with as magical a celerity—for the cycle of tropical vegetation is a swift one—by scrubby bush, frangipane, aloe, cactus, and every thorny and prickly thing "for which we may thank Adam." And thus matters have, in the main, gone their course up to the present day.

Shall we add how, in 1867, the American eagle cast a longing eye on this sea-girt morsel? and how the majesty of Denmark, not less eager for I forget how many millions of dollars, dangled the tempting bait before the republican bird, till it was thought to be a bargain between them; only when it came to payment, the greenbacks were not forthcoming, and one more repudiation of agreement was noted in Jonathan's account-book? Or shall we chronicle the hurricanes of 1819, 1833, 1867, and 1871; or depict the terrors of the earthquake *plus* sea-wave that, on the third of the above-assigned dates, made such a mark upon the imaginations of the inhabitants of St. Thomas? Enough; the stars and the stripes have not yet supplanted the Dannebrog on the fort heights, and, except a headless palm or two, few traces of a cyclone outlast a twelvemonth; at any rate, none appear in view as we exchange the glossy blackness of Heaven and the *Challenger* best know how many thousand fathoms of the pure Atlantic depths outside for the muddy green of shallow waters and an uncleanly harbour.

"Charlotte-Amalia" is, so old Danish maps inform us, the name of the town; and perhaps the gods still call it so; only, like the old knight's song in Alice's "Wonderland," or "Looking-glass"—I am not sure which, neither of those authentic narratives forming part of my travelling library, the more's the pity—it is called quite differently among mortals, in whose vocabulary it has appropriated to itself the apostolic-sounding designation of the entire island. But, whatever its name, the town looks pretty enough from the prow of the steamer as we pass between the lighthouse on our right and the two-gun fort on our left, and make for our anchorage; though an officer of the *Elbe*—sociable and chatty, as most of the R.M.S.P. Company's officers are—informs me, as I gaze upon

it, that it shows still prettier when seen from the stern of the boat. I can readily believe him; for the same glance that tells me in the first half-minute whatever there is to like in the town of St. Thomas, tells me also what there is not.

Part on, part between three buttress-like pyramidical spurs which run down seaward almost to the water's edge from a high knife-ridge of reddish-brown bush-sprinkled hills, there stand, crowded together, about fifteen hundred white-walled, red-roofed, green-shuttered houses, one rather bigger, another smaller, than its neighbour; but all without more method or order in their juxtaposition than that observable in a chance human crowd, each house having apparently jostled itself into the midst, and occupied the first piece of ground on which it could secure a footing, selfishly regardless of any other consideration. The next object of each appears to have been which should display the greatest number of windows. A Danish Pitt might from the taxation of those apertures alone clear off half the national debt of Denmark, whatever its amount. Every window presents instead of glass—a substance rarely employed here in the form of panes, and indeed superfluous in so mild a climate—Venetian jalousies of the conventional green, besides a pair of stout wooden shutters, to be closed and barred at the first threat of a hurricane, not else. For of nightly thieves, housebreakers, and villanous "centre-bits" there is little fear, partly owing to the efficiency of the Danish town-police, partly to the character of the islanders themselves, of whom more hereafter. As to the houses themselves, a few—very few—of them are solidly built; red brick picked out with plaster, of which last-named material, eked out with lath and rubble, far the greater number wholly consist; some are even mere wooden barracks, spacious, ugly, and insecure to see. Wood or otherwise, almost all these dwellings prove on a near inspection to be trumpery run-up constructions, with thin walls baking in the blazing sun, shallow unprotective roof-eaves, and the majority without a verandah of any sort. Only here and there some more pretentious mansion—the large, ungainly edifice recently erected as Government House, for instance—has pushed out—Heaven save the mark!—a cast-iron balcony, as ugly as any that ever figured at Hammersmith or on the Brompton Road. Worse yet are the churches; the so-called English, *i.e.* Colono-Episcopalian, being of ante-Puginian Gothic, hideous enough in any latitude, absolutely monstrous in this; the Dutch Reformed, or Presbyterian, is the heaviest plaster Doric; the Moravian Chapel a large shapeless barn; and the Danish, or Lutheran Church, a simple nondescript.

An East Indian bungalow, a Brazilian cathedral, even a Turkish residence in Upper Egypt, each tells in its outline, and yet more in its details, something either of the architectural traditions peculiar to the race that erected it, or of prudent adaptation to a new climate; or, it may be, of both. Hence, in looking on buildings like these, we at once perceive that their architects, whether Portuguese, Turks, or English, had fully determined to make the country they came to govern or to colonise their own home in the

fullest sense of the word; nor yet, while modifying, to renounce altogether the hereditary and almost typical peculiarities of their original nationality. St. Thomas, on the contrary, is in its general character neither Danish nor Dutch nor anything else; it is an aggregation of lodgers and lodging-houses, nothing more; English, Scotch, Spanish, French, Italian, American, architects, inhabitants—the only object they have had, one and all, in settling here, has been that of making as much money as they could from the business of the place, and then being off as quick as possible. Their stay in the island is a mere temporary makeshift, a commercial arrangement, and their dwellings are naturally enough in accordance with their scheme of life.

Pleasanter objects to look at are the little cottage-houses where mulatto, or, as they prefer being called, "coloured," families make their nests. Bright-painted wooden boxes, green or blue, all made up to outward appearance of doors, windows, and galleries, but well sheltered from the brooding heat by projecting roofs, wide verandahs, and flowering tropical trees, planted wherever the rocky soil will allow a root to hold, they harmonise well with the climate, and give correct indication of a comparatively settled population for their inhabitants. These last are chiefly clerks, artisans, skilled workmen, and the like, some born in the island itself, others natives of Tortola, Antigua, Barbadoes, Porto Rico, and the like. Their number is more than double that of the European-born colonists. A gay, active, and improvident set, they at least know how to live; the West Indian archipelago is their home; they have no other; they are part and parcel of the island; to its conditions they suit the circumstances of their existence, and make the best of climate and everything else. Cross-breeds and the Europeans together amount to a third or so of the entire population of St. Thomas; but the two castes do not socially coalesce, and the aims and sentiments of the one have little in common with those of the other.

Scattered round the outskirts of the town, and jotted, where one least expects to find them, among the mango-trees and guava-bushes of the open country, small wattled or boarded cabins, each hardly bigger than a sentry-box, but by no means equally compact in its construction, give shelter to negro families. Free men now, and ready enough to work, to gain, and to squander too; unwilling only, partly owing to the hated and still fresh reminiscences of slavery, partly from their own natural instability of character, to enter into long engagements or to pledge their labour beforehand, these darkies constitute about two-thirds of the inhabitants of the island. Their shirts and trousers are more or less of European cut; but, dress and language apart, they differ in hardly any respect from their free brethren in Syria or Turkey. Mahometans there, they have here adapted Christianity, some one fashion, some another, according to that patronised by their former masters; but, Christian or Moslem, of dogma for itself they have little care; their creed is emotional only, and perhaps not much the worse for being so. Their huts, too, are the

most genuinely tropical objects of West Indian domestic architecture. I have seen the exact likenesses of them in Nubia and Yemen.

And the Danes? Well; if St. Thomas be, so far as the European population is concerned, a mere lodging-house, the Danes here act the part of the lodging-house keepers, neither more nor less. Like the rest, they resign themselves to live in hired dwellings; they collect customs and taxes, keep up a strict police by land and harbour, levy fines on unlicensed salesmen and market women, imprison drunkards and vagrants, and—well, that is pretty nearly all. In the commercial enterprise, the shipping interests, the trade and traffic of the island they govern, they have next to no share; in planting and in agriculture no skill; in the island and its tenants no interest; nor do they care to take any measure for creating such among others on their account. Indeed, there is not throughout the whole of St. Thomas a single Danish school, nor in the solitary bookseller's shop (which, by the way, is a Moravian, not a Danish establishment) of the town is a Danish grammar or dictionary to be found. The public offices themselves, the law and police courts, and the rest, are mere hired rooms, or slight constructions of the usual makeshift character; they, too, are the work of the colonists and settlers; not a farthing has been contributed by the Treasury of Copenhagen towards their construction. A small, quaint, square fort, with battlements and turrets, much like those out of which the St. Barbara of art or the imprisoned princesses of fairy tales are wont to gaze, and which in fact now serves as town gaol, is the only edifice contributed by Denmark herself to the town and island. The walls of this toy-castle are painted red, and the red Danish flag flies from the small round keep; it looks hot enough in the sun, and suggests the idea that the prisoners inside, now its only occupants, must be uncomfortably hot too. But the prison, fort, and flag excepted, no other symbol of Danish rule meets the gazer's eye as it takes in the panorama of the town from the steamer anchorage about a quarter of a mile off.

Nor when we land on the negro-crowded wharf do we find much to modify our first impressions in this respect. There is, indeed, a carved Danish inscription—the only one, so far as I have been able to discover, in the entire island—over the door of the staircase that leads up to the Custom House rooms; and Danish names, to which no one in common use pays the slightest attention, are roughly painted up at the corners of several streets. Also you may occasionally meet a tall, light-complexioned individual, whose stiff carriage and ceremonious bearing proclaims him a Danish official; or a blond, heavy-eyed, slightly, or very, as the case may be, intoxicated, white-clothed soldier; there are about sixty of them on the island. Poor fellows! they have but a dull time of it in garrison; and if they occasionally try to render it a little less tedious by "heavy-headed revel," Hamlet himself would hardly have included them in the severity of his comments on this national failing: they have excuse for it if ever any one had. These things apart, however,

there is nothing visible to right or left to indicate that the island belongs, and has for two centuries belonged, to the Danes, rather than to the Americans, the Chinese, or the Khan of Crim Tartary.

The universal language of communication among the inhabitants, white, black, or coloured, is English; but such English! a compound of negro grammar, Yankee accent, and Creole drawl; to "arrange" is to "fix," "Sir" is "Sa'ar," "boat" is "ba'awt," and so on. The announcements of the shop fronts, the placards on the walls, the debile little newspapers (there are two published here, and the ferocious antagonism of their respective editors in print is, I trust, limited to that medium, and does not represent their private and personal feelings), are English; and, but for an occasional Spanish sentence, English is the only language you hear in market, street, or shop. I beg pardon: there are no "shops" in St. Thomas, only "stores;" just as every man here, dust-carters and coal-heavers not excepted, is a "gentleman," and every woman, including the aged black Hebe who distributes rum and gin for two cents to her sailor customers, a "lady." The physical atmosphere you breathe may be that of the tropics; but the moral or non-moral, public and private, is that of New York; as for the social, it has in it a corrective dash of Spanish Creolism, in which languor supplies an opportune check on vice, and nonchalance on dishonesty. For the rest, as you walk down, that is west (for the ever-blowing east trade wind determines the "up" of the island), along the main street on the narrow alluvial level between the hill slope and the crescent harbour base, you might, but for the blazing sun and dazzling azure overhead, almost fancy yourself in a 'long-shore quarter of Southampton or Wapping. Ship chandleries, dry goods, rum shops, slop shops, tobacco shops, sailors' homes (such homes! fleecing dens they might more truly be called), coal wharves, timber yards—objects that no climate can beautify, no associations render other than mean and vulgar. The latitude is the latitude of the poet-sung tropics; but the scene is a scene of the coarsest Europe. In vain you call to mind the metrical enchantments of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" or dreamy "Voyage," of Byron's heated "Island," of Coleridge's magical "Fragment:" everything around dispels the conjured-up illusion. A drunken seaman and a filthy old hag are squabbling on one side of you: words very English certainly, but not to be found in Johnson's dictionary, issue from the grog shop on the other: the vile features of a Creole crimp, arm in arm with a mottled-faced, dull-eyed Halifax skipper, meet you in front: sight, hearing, smell, all are of that peculiar description which charms the sailor, the British specimen in particular, and those too, perhaps, who make money out of or through him; but which is, as Carlyle might say, "exhilarating in the long run to no other created being"—to none, at least, who have not received the special training of those useful but unlovely classes.

Nor are the details of the town in other respects such as to bear with advantage a close examination. The streets, the main one excepted, are mostly mere lanes, narrow, and crooked; while many of them—those,

namely, which run from the harbour inland—consist of flights of stony stairs, which had Byron seen he would have blessed those of Malta by comparison instead of cursing them. The pavement, too, absolutely wanting in not a few places, is rough and full of holes in others; and the drains—for sanitary motives, say the townsmen!—are all open; what the result is after a fortnight or so of hot, dry weather I leave to the imagination of those highly respectable members of Parliamentary Committees who lay yearly reports on corresponding odorous topics before our British noses. Gaslights exist, it is true, in the principal thoroughfares, but they are few and far between; while for the shiny nights of half the month the wandering moon bears alone the charge of public illumination; whence it follows that the clouds and the municipality have too often to divide the responsibility of outer darkness and its consequences, physical or moral. I have not myself had the good fortune of visiting Copenhagen; but I trust that the Danes at home treat their capital better than they do the principal town of their West Indian possessions.

But the place, though it cannot be called lovely, is lively enough. Siestas, strange to say, in spite of the relaxing climate and the infectious proximity to the Spanish colonies, are not the fashion here, and from sunrise to sunset the main street can show a medley of nationalities to the full as varied as that which daily throng the wooden bridge of Galata, but with a much greater diversity of hue. Black, indeed, predominates among the complexions, and white among the garments; but between these extremes of colour every shade of skin and dress alike may be observed. Broad-brimmed Panama hats distinguish in general the better class of citizens; commoner straw shelters poorer heads. Sallow, parboiled-looking countenances with now and then an unhealthy flush, telling a tale of brandy overmuch in the daily allowance of iced water, denote the North European, Teuton, or Scandinavian, Briton, German, Dane, Dutch, and Swede, with the pale, over-worked-looking, sharp-featured Yankee. A darker tinge of face and hair, and a slenderer form, indicates the Italian, French, or Spanish salesman; the white Creole, whatever his semi or quarter nationality, may always be recognised by his peculiarly weedy aspect and lack-lustre eye. Two or three generations of West Indian birth and breeding, unrenewed by fresh European or African grafts, suffice to thin out the richest European blood, and to dull into lethargy the most active North European brain, till the Englishman, Dane, Norwegian, or Dutchman becomes a thing for the very negroes to pity or despise. "Miscegenation," to borrow an ungainly American word, may have its drawbacks; but exclusiveness of alliance means for the North European in these regions speedy degeneration and disappearance.

Busy, restless, affable, at once cringing and forward in manner, who does not recognise the children of Israel, the genuine descendants of clever, birthright-purloining Jacob, whatever be the land of their sojourn in their world-wide dispersion? Here in St. Thomas we have them of

there is nothing visible to right or left to indicate that the island belongs, and has for two centuries belonged, to the Danes, rather than to the Americans, the Chinese, or the Khan of Crim Tartary.

The universal language of communication among the inhabitants, white, black, or coloured, is English; but such English! a compound of negro grammar, Yankee accent, and Creole drawl; to "arrange" is to "fix," "Sir" is "Sa'ar," "boat" is "ba'awt," and so on. The announcements of the shop fronts, the placards on the walls, the debile little newspapers (there are two published here, and the ferocious antagonism of their respective editors in print is, I trust, limited to that medium, and does not represent their private and personal feelings), are English; and, but for an occasional Spanish sentence, English is the only language you hear in market, street, or shop. I beg pardon: there are no "shops" in St. Thomas, only "stores;" just as every man here, dust-carters and coal-heavers not excepted, is a "gentleman," and every woman, including the aged black Hebe who distributes rum and gin for two cents to her sailor customers, a "lady." The physical atmosphere you breathe may be that of the tropics; but the moral or non-moral, public and private, is that of New York; as for the social, it has in it a corrective dash of Spanish Creolism, in which languor supplies an opportune check on vice, and nonchalance on dishonesty. For the rest, as you walk down, that is west (for the ever-blowing east trade wind determines the "up" of the island), along the main street on the narrow alluvial level between the hill slope and the crescent harbour base, you might, but for the blazing sun and dazzling azure overhead, almost fancy yourself in a 'long-shore quarter of Southampton or Wapping. Ship chandleries, dry goods, rum shops, slop shops, tobacco shops, sailors' homes (such homes! fleecing dens they might more truly be called), coal wharves, timber yards—objects that no climate can beautify, no associations render other than mean and vulgar. The latitude is the latitude of the poet-sung tropics; but the scene is a scene of the coarsest Europe. In vain you call to mind the metrical enchantments of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" or dreamy "Voyage," of Byron's heated "Island," of Coleridge's magical "Fragment:" everything around dispels the conjured-up illusion. A drunken seaman and a filthy old hag are squabbling on one side of you: words very English certainly, but not to be found in Johnson's dictionary, issue from the grog shop on the other: the vile features of a Creole crimp, arm in arm with a mottled-faced, dull-eyed Halifax skipper, meet you in front: sight, hearing, smell, all are of that peculiar description which charms the sailor, the British specimen in particular, and those too, perhaps, who make money out of or through him; but which is, as Carlyle might say, "exhilarating in the long run to no other created being"—to none, at least, who have not received the special training of those useful but unlovely classes.

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every sort, dark and fair, lean and burly, but all alike intent on gain; now prosperous, now bankrupt; the very climate that may occasionally somewhat slacken their outward man has no relaxing effect on the irrepressible energy of their will. It is curious to enter their synagogue—a large, crowded, and evidently thriving one—and to hear the unchanged songs of old David and older Moses in the oldest language of the Old World, intoned here with as much fervency of utterance and singleness of belief as ever they had been in the Eastern hemisphere under the palms of Jordan, long before a Western world and the cocoanut trees of its islands had been heard or dreamt of. The first names entered on the world's racecourse, they bid fair to be among the first on its books when the winners are told off at the close. Meanwhile the antithesis their activity affords to the lounging, careless, take-it-easy movements of the big negroes at every turn and corner, does much to enliven the sun-heated streets and thoroughfares of the town.

But it is at night, and especially when the white rays of the full moon, the Queen of the Tropics, delusively cover roofs and pavement with what seems a smooth layer of fresh-fallen snow, that the main street of St. Thomas, the open space in front of the Custom House, known as King's Wharf—the only stone wharf, by the bye, in the whole harbour, and constructed not indeed with Danish money, but under Danish superintendence—and the acacia-planted square, that serves as market-place by day, all show to the best advantage. Then the negroes, who here, as in the cheerful Levant, and even on the misty Euxine coast, keep up unaltered their ancestral African customs of nightly merry-makings—a custom which the Arabs alone, of all races that it has been my fortune to dwell amongst, share with them—come out in their gayest dresses and gayest mood, to shout, laugh, sing, romp, and divert themselves like the overgrown children that they are. Tall, black men in white clothes and straw-hats, tall, black women too, handsome in form if not in feature, their heads bound round with many-coloured turbans, sweep through the crowd with an easy freedom of gait and bold step very different from the shuffling, embarrassed style of the nerveless Creole lady and her overdressed European sister; while the light-flowing gown of the negress and her variegated head-gear give her, even independently of her dark complexion, a semi-tropical look that suits the climate, and harmonises much better than stiff crinolines and artificial flowers with the surroundings of West Indian nature. When will civilised women, or civilised men either, learn that individual beauty, to have its complete effect, must harmonise with the general? that form and colour, size and shape, however fair or stately in themselves, acquire their ultimate perfection from the place they occupy? that what is well under one sky may be ill under another? what is justly admired in Europe be a failure in Asia? and what looks lovely under a tropical blaze be void of charm amid the mists of northern gloom? When the Egyptians erected the colonnades of Luxor on the shores of the great Nile, the Greeks the Parthenon among the blue picture-

like hills of Attica, and mediæval architects the clustering pinnacles of Laon beside the orchards and green hill-slopes of Picardy, they accomplished in every instance an abiding success, different the one from the other, but each perfect in its kind—an example, a lesson, and a wonder to all ages. Why, then, have their later successors, who in modern times have attempted to reproduce these very masterpieces of beauty in elaborate copies, every measurement, every line, every detail the same, failed not less completely than the others succeeded? Is it not that they ignored, with the ignorance that amounts to stolidity, the effect of altered conditions, of changed times, of different climate, of dissimilar surroundings, both of nature and art? while the former architects, Egyptian, Gaul, or Greek, knew, with the knowledge that amounts to instinct, not only the laws of construction and the grace of individual outline, but also those of collective harmony; and built aptly besides building well. Thus it is and always must be, East or West alike, with architecture of whatever kind, public or private; thus, too, in great measure with sculpture, with painting, with ornament, with dress—in a word, with art of every sort.

Meanwhile, as we walk and philosophise in the tepid night air and pale moonshine, from behind a hundred open lighted windows comes the sound of jingling pianos, where mulatto girls are performing their endless Spanish waltzes; performances accompanied in many a little house by the clamour of many voices and the stamp of dancing feet. All is frank, unrestrained merry-making, high spirits, and fun; the more cheerful because—to the credit of the blacks be it said—it is seldom excited or accompanied by drink, more seldom by drunkenness. West Indian negroes, in spite of the contrary example set them more or less by almost every class and description of whites in these islands, are generally free from this particular form of vice; and though the morality of domestic life is not so much low as absolutely wanting among them—indeed, that *non est inventus* might be the correct verdict of a "virtue" court—the frailties of the island-born African, or black Creole, are rarely excused or aggravated by drink. Among the mulattoes, on the contrary, as among mixed races in general, the bad qualities of either parentage seem to come uppermost; and the immorality of the negro is with them often enhanced by the drunkenness of the Briton and the murderous treachery of the Spaniard. "God made white men, and God made black men, but the devil made brown ones," is a common proverb here, and it often finds its justification in fact.

Town and inhabitants—the Israelite colony alone after its measure excepted—all impress you as mere mushroom growths of the day, with little root in the past, and hardly a promise of greater fixity in the future. And yet whatever "Charlotte-Amalia," to give the place its distinctive name, may prove to be when you are fairly in it and of it—seen from outside, and especially from the harbour point of view, it has a curiously delusive Levantine look; so much so, that a voyager, who, under some strange enchantment of the "Sleeping Beauty" kind, should have closed

his eyes while just off Smyrna or Latakia, and then first awakened up when the fairy ship was in the act of entering the port of St. Thomas, might almost fancy that he had never left the Syrian or Ægean coast. He would, in fact, find before him much the same picturesque sprinkling of pretty toy-like houses that he had last seen under the sun of Anatolia; for instance, the same green masses, or orchard-trees, both running up the same abrupt rocky slopes, practicable indeed for horses, but evidently prohibitive of carriage use; the same high, bush-sprinkled, half-savage ridge of hills behind the same untidy wharves, makeshift landing-places, and rubbish-strewn beach; the same superfluity of little boats, plying hither and thither between the larger craft, or swarming, as though with piratical intent, round the sides of each new arrival; the same clear sharpness of light and shade; the same pure sea-water, brisk air, and bright sky. No, not exactly the same, any one of these; since a more careful inspection would detect strange foliage—cocoa-nut, for example, or papai—among the trees, giving notice of a latitude more southerly far than the Levantine; the water, too, is the inky Atlantic black, not the ultramarine Mediterranean blue in its clearness; and the low, drifting fleeces of white cloud that emerge, curl after curl, from behind the easterly hill-range, and sweep swiftly across the dazzling sky to the west, are driven by no Asiatic land-breeze, but obey the trade-winds of the ocean expanse.

But, general outline and natural features apart, there are some special objects in which St. Thomas may claim a real, though superficial, resemblance with the time-honoured Levant. Thus, at the very entry of the harbour, near a diminutive powder-shed, there stands a battery, which—but that the Danish, and not the Turkish, flag overshadows it—might, by a new-comer, be almost conjectured to belong to the same class of constructions that stand guard at the entry of the Bosphorus or the quarantine bay of Trebizond. Through the thin embrasures of a decrepit parapet wall two rusty cannons protrude their muzzles, the one pointing at an angle of 45° to the heaven above, the other at a similar inclination to the waters beneath. Quite Turkish, both for appearance and efficiency. Nor do the five or six antiquated tubes of old iron that peer over the edges of the queer, red-painted fort walls at the harbour's base differ in any essential respect from the artillery supplied by the Topkhaneh of Constantinople to the imperial provinces. Strangely, too, like the ruins that on almost every jutting rock of the Anatolian coast commemorate the days of semi-independent Pashas and pugnacious Dereh-begs, are the two round towers, massive and grey, that crown, the one "Government Hill," the easternmost of the three already mentioned as included in the town itself; the other, an isolated rising ground near the base of the harbour. Nor is this resemblance one of outward form only, but of historical meaning; for, unlike everything else in the island, these towers are dignified by having a tradition of their own; and in popular belief at least, if not in fact, they supply the "missing link" between the modern St. Thomas of sharp Yankeefied traders, and the old St. Thomas

of *bonâ fide* pirates and buccaneers. One of these ruins bears the name of Blue Beard's, the other of Black Beard's, Tower. This New World Blue Beard, however, unlike, so far, to his namesake of European or, as some say, of Asiatic celebrity, has left behind him no record by which he can be identified—not so much as a fairy legend; no Sister Anne climbed to the top of his tower to proclaim to her hastening brothers the dark mysteries within its walls; and we are free to conjecture not seven, but if we like, seventy decapitated wives, and horrors compared with which those of the famous blood-stained closet were gentle matrimonial endearments.

More, or perhaps less, fortunate in this respect, Black Beard has found authentic chroniclers of his deeds, private as well as public. A native of Bristol, Captain Trench—to give him the name by which he started in life—was one of the many brave sea-ruling Britons who in the seventeenth century developed by a ready course of natural selection, and a pre-Darwinian struggle for life, from privateers into pirates.

Our hero's short but glorious career was run between Jamaica and the Virginian coast. St. Thomas lies midway, and the innumerable creeks, inlets, and bays that indent its bush-lined shore may well have afforded shelter and concealment to Black Beard as well as to others of this trade. And certainly when attired in his favourite full-dress style, and with his beard (which we are assured covered his whole face, eyes and nose probably excepted) twisted into a hundred curls, each curl dandily tied up in a bow of red ribbon, and illuminated by twenty burning matches stuck, ten of a side, under the brim of his hat, the Captain must have produced quite a sensation among the inhabitants—Carib, negro, Dutch, or Dane—of the little island. Indeed the "flaming ministers" of his toilet seem to have proved for West Indian fair ones not less attractive than lighted tapers commonly are for evening moths; and we read that fourteen wives—successive or simultaneous, the story says not—were drawn by their rays, and entangled in the mazes of that ribboned beard. Unfortunately the human butterflies seem to have paid not less dearly for their folly than is ordinarily the case with their insect prototypes, since Black Beard, unless much maligned, was a very Blue Beard in domestic life.

"A cross between Puck and Moloch" is the title given by the shrewd historical estimate of Macaulay to one of the pet monarch heroes of an eccentricity-loving writer of our own day. What the father of the Great Frederick was in his own family and Court, that and more was Captain Trench among his crew—a hero after Mr. Carlyle's own heart, and not less worthy of a place in the Pantheon of his worship than Friedrich Wilhelm or Governor Eyre himself. Indeed the choicest diversions of Potsdam or Morant Bay seem tame when compared with Black Beard's practical fun. "Let us make a little hell of our own, and try who can bear it longest," said, one day, the gallant Captain, as he forced some choice spirits of his crew to descend with him into the ship's hold. When all were below, Black Beard carefully closed the hatches on the company and himself;

and then proceeded to set on fire several pots which he had previously arranged, ready filled with shavings and sulphur. His companions, almost suffocated, soon cried out for mercy; but Black Beard's lungs, as well as his heart, were made of sterner stuff, and he did not let them out of his imitation hell till they had almost exchanged the trial for the reality. Thinking them, however, it seems, sufficiently prepared by this experiment for the latter, he soon after took measures for sending one or two of them there at short notice. To this end he invited his comrades one evening to a sociable merry-making in his cabin; and, while they sat drinking there, he suddenly blew out the light, crossed his hands, in each of which was a loaded and a ready-cocked pistol, and cheerfully fired across the table. Sad to say, his praiseworthy intentions were frustrated of their accomplishment; only wounds, and not death, following upon this "merry jest." But to do the bearded Captain justice, when not his own men, but prisoners from another ship, were before him, he seldom failed to take better aim. How much the unhanged survivors of his crew, not to mention his fourteen disconsolate widows, bewailed his loss, when Lieutenant Maynard, R.N., sailed into the harbour of Virginia with this worthy's head, beard ribbons, matches, and all, suspended from his bowsprit, history has left unrecorded.

Whether Black Beard really built, and, while on shore—taking refuge from his pursuers, or recruiting supplies for fresh exploits at sea—actually dwelt in the thick-walled round tower that now crowns the highly respectable summit of Government Hill, is, however, uncertain; here, as in the case of so many other heroic memorials, it is merely tradition *versus* want of evidence. Old ship-cannon have indeed been dug out of the neighbouring soil; and a huge oblong mass of brickwork, close by the tower itself, is said to cover alike the remains—headless, I suppose—and the ill-gotten riches of the pirate. But from one or other motive—chiefly, perhaps, from the listless indifference that characterises the white population of the West Indian settlements in general—nobody has taken the trouble to settle, by a few strokes of the mattock, the truth, or, more probably still, the falsehood, of the legend.

"*Requiescat in pace*," if peace there be for such, along with the great Captains Kidd, Avory, Low, and other kindred sea-heroes, "all of them fallen, slain by the sword, who caused their terror in the land of the living." Hell-twins, piracy and slavery—they have both, after centuries of blood and crime, been well nigh exorcised from the New-World coasts, or only linger under the appropriate flags of Spain and Holy Church, the flags of Alva and Pizarro, of Torquemada and the Inquisition. It is "the glory, far above all else on earth," of England to have first pronounced their exorcism; the final consummation of that sentence on the ill remnants of Cuba may, though delayed awhile, be yet executed by England's eldest child, the great American Republic. The work is a good work: honour to those who complete it, of whatever nationality they be!

W. G. P.

Victor Hugo's Romances.

Après le roman pittoresque mais prosaïque de Walter Scott il restera un autre roman à créer, plus beau et plus complet encore selon nous. C'est le roman, à la fois drame et épopée, pittoresque mais poétique, réel mais idéal, vrai mais grand, qui enchâssera Walter Scott dans Homère.—Victor Hugo on *Quentin Durward.*

Victor Hugo's romances occupy an important position in the history of literature; many innovations, timidly made elsewhere, have in them been carried boldly out to their last consequences; much that was indefinite in literary tendencies has attained to definite maturity; many things have come to a point and been distinguished one from the other; and it is only in the last romance of all, *Quatre Vingt Treize*, that this culmination is most perfect. This is in the nature of things. Men who are in any way typical of a stage of progress may be compared more justly to the hand upon the dial of the clock, which continues to advance as it indicates, than to the stationary milestone, which is only the measure of what is past. The movement is not arrested. That significant something by which the work of such a man differs from that of his predecessors, goes on disengaging itself and becoming more and more articulate and cognisable. The same principle of growth that carried his first book beyond the books of previous writers, carries his last book beyond his first. And just as the most imbecile production of any literary age gives us sometimes the very clue to comprehension we have sought long and vainly in contemporary masterpieces, so it may be the very weakest of an author's books that, coming in the sequel of many others, enables us at last to get hold of what underlies the whole of them,—of that spinal marrow of significance that unites the work of his life into something organic and rational. This is what has been done by *Quatre Vingt Treize* for the earlier romances of Victor Hugo, and through them, for a whole division of modern literature. We have here the legitimate continuation of a long and living literary tradition; and hence, so far, its explanation. When many lines diverge from each other in direction so slightly as to confuse the eye, we know that we have only to produce them to make the chaos plain: this is continually so in literary history; and we shall best understand the importance of Victor Hugo's romances if we think of them as some such prolongation of one of the main lines of literary tendency.

When we compare the novels of Walter Scott with those of the man of genius who preceded him and whom he delighted to honour as a

master in the art—I mean Henry Fielding—we shall be somewhat puzzled, at the first moment, to explain the difference that there is between these two. Fielding has as much human science; has a far firmer hold upon the tiller of his story; has a keen sense of character, which he draws (and Scott often does so too) in a rather abstract and academical manner; and finally, is quite as humorous and quite as good-humoured as the great Scotchman. With all these points of resemblance between the men, it is astonishing that their work should be so different. The fact is, that the English novel was looking one way and seeking one set of effects in the hands of Fielding; and in the hands of Scott it was looking eagerly in all ways and searching for all the effects that by any possibility it could utilise. The difference between these two men marks a great enfranchisement. With Scott the Romantic movement, the movement of an extended curiosity and an enfranchised imagination has begun. This is a trite thing to say; but trite things are often very indefinitely comprehended: and this enfranchisement, in as far as it regards the technical change that came over modern prose romance, has never perhaps been explained with any clearness.

To do so, it will be necessary roughly to compare the two sets of conventions upon which plays and romances are respectively based. The purposes of these two arts are so much alike, and they deal so much with the same passions and interests, that we are apt to forget the fundamental opposition of their methods. And yet such a fundamental opposition exists. In the drama the action is developed in great measure by means of things that remain outside of the art; by means of real things, that is, and not artistic conventions for things. This is a sort of realism, that is not to be confounded with that realism in painting of which we hear so much. The realism in painting is a thing of purposes; this, that we have to indicate in the drama, is an affair of method. We have heard a story, indeed, of a painter in France who, when he wanted to paint a sea-beach, carried realism from his ends to his means and plastered real sand upon his canvas; and that is precisely what is done in the drama. The dramatic author has to paint his beaches with real sand: real live men and women move about the stage; we hear real voices; what is feigned merely puts an edge upon what is; we do actually see a woman go behind a screen as Lady Teazle, and, after a certain interval, we do actually see her very shamefully produced again. Now all these things, that remain as they were in life, and are not transmuted into any artistic convention, are terribly stubborn and difficult to deal with; and hence there are for the dramatist many resultant limitations in time and space. These limitations in some sort approximate towards those of painting: the dramatic author is tied down, not indeed to a moment, but to the duration of each scene or act; he is confined to the stage, almost as the painter is confined within his frame. But the great restriction is this, that a dramatic author must deal with his actors, and with his actors alone. Certain moments of suspense, certain significant dispositions of personages, a certain logical advance of

fable, these are the only means at the disposal of the playwright. It is true that, with the assistance of the scene-painter, the costumier and the conductor of the orchestra, he may add to this something of pageant, something of sound and fury; but these are, for the dramatic writer, beside the mark, and do not come under the vivifying touch of his genius. When we turn to romance, we find this no longer. Here nothing is reproduced to our senses directly. Not only the main conception of the work, but the scenery, the appliances, the mechanism by which this conception is brought home to us, have been put through the crucible of another man's mind, and come out again, one and all, in the form of written words. With the loss of every degree of such realism as we have described, there is for art a clear gain of liberty and largeness of competence. Thus, painting, in which the round outlines of things are thrown on to a flat board, is far more free than sculpture, in which their solidity is preserved. It is by giving up these childish identities that art gains true strength. And so in the case of novels as compared with the stage. Continuous narration is the flat board on to which the novelist throws everything. And from this, there results for him a great loss of vividness, but a great compensating gain in his power over the subject; so that he can now subordinate one thing to another in importance, and introduce all manner of very subtle detail, to a degree that was before impossible. He can render just as easily the flourish of trumpets before a victorious emperor and the gossip of country market women, the gradual decay of forty years of a man's life and the gesture of a passionate moment. He finds himself equally unable, if he looks at it from one point of view—equally able, if he looks at it from another point of view—to reproduce a colour, a sound, an outline, a logical argument, a physical action. He can show his readers, behind and around the personages that for the moment occupy the foreground of his story, the continual suggestion of the landscape; the turn of the weather that will turn with it men's lives and fortunes, dimly foreshadowed on the horizon; the fatality of distant events, the stream of national tendency, the grand salient framework of causation. And all this thrown upon the flat board—all this entering, naturally and smoothly, into the texture of continuous intelligent narration.

This touches the difference between Fielding and Scott. In the work of the latter, true to his character of a modern and a romantic, we become suddenly conscious of the background. Fielding, on the other hand, although he had recognised that the novel was nothing else than an epic in prose, wrote in the spirit not of the epic, but of the drama. This is not, of course, to say that the drama was in any way incapable of a regeneration similar in kind to that of which I am now speaking with regard to the novel. The notorious contrary fact is sufficient to guard the reader against such a misconstruction. All that is meant is, that Fielding remained ignorant of certain capabilities which the novel possesses over the drama; or, at least, neglected and did not develope them. To the end he continued to see things as a playwright sees them. The

world with which he dealt, the world he had realised for himself and sought to realise and set before his readers, was a world of exclusively human interest. As for landscape he was content to underline stage directions, as it might be done in a play-book: Tom and Molly retire into a practicable wood. As for nationality and public sentiment it is curious enough to think that Tom Jones is laid in the year forty-five, and that the only use he makes of the rebellion is to throw a troop of soldiers into his hero's way. It is most really important, however, to notice the change which has been introduced into the conception of character by the beginning of the romantic movement and the consequent introduction into fiction of a vast amount of new material. Fielding tells us as much as he thought necessary to account for the actions of his creatures; he thought that each of these actions could be decomposed on the spot into a few simple personal elements, as we decompose a force in a question of perfectly abstract dynamics. The larger motives are all unknown to him; he had not understood that the configuration of the landscape or the fashion of the times could be for anything in a story; and so, naturally and rightly, he said nothing about them. But Scott's instinct, the instinct of the man of an age profoundly different, taught him otherwise; and, in his work, the individual characters begin to occupy a comparatively small proportion of that canvas on which armies manœuvre, and great hills pile themselves upon each other's shoulders. Fielding's characters were always great to the full stature of a perfectly arbitrary will. Already in Scott we begin to have a sense of the subtle influences that moderate and qualify a man's personality; that personality is no longer thrown out in unnatural isolation, but is resumed into its place in the constitution of things.

It is this change in the manner of regarding men and their actions first exhibited in romance, that has since renewed and vivified history. For art precedes philosophy and even science. People must have noticed things and interested themselves in them before they begin to debate upon their causes or influence. And it is in this way that art is the pioneer of knowledge; those predilections of the artist he knows not why, those irrational acceptations and recognitions, reclaim, out of the world that we have not yet realised, ever another and another corner; and after the facts have been thus vividly brought before us and have had time to settle and arrange themselves in our minds, some day there will be found the man of science to stand up and give the explanation. Scott took an interest in many things in which Fielding took none; and for this reason, and no other, he introduced them into his romances. If he had been told what would be the nature of the movement that he was so lightly initiating, he would have been very incredulous and not a little scandalised. At the time when he wrote the real drift of this new manner of pleasing people in fiction was not yet apparent; and, even now, it is only by looking at the romances of Victor Hugo that we are enabled to form any proper judgment in the matter. These books are not only descended by

ordinary generation from the Waverley novels, but it is in them chiefly that we shall find the revolutionary tradition of Scott carried farther; that we shall find Scott himself, in so far as regards his conception of prose fiction and its purposes, surpassed in his own spirit, instead of tamely followed. We have here, as I said before, a line of literary tendency produced, and by this production definitely separated from others. When we come to Hugo, we see that the deviation, which seemed slight enough and not very serious between Scott and Fielding, is indeed such a great gulph in thought and sentiment as only successive generations can pass over; and it is but natural that one of the great advances that Hugo has made upon Scott is an advance in self-consciousness. Both men follow the same road; but where the one went blindly and carelessly, the other advances with all deliberation and forethought. There never was artist much more unconscious than Scott; and there have been not many more conscious than Hugo. The passage at the head of these pages shows how organically he had understood the nature of his own changes. He has, underlying each of the five great romances (which alone we purpose here to examine), two deliberate designs: one artistic, the other consciously ethical and intellectual. This is a man living in a different world from Scott, who professes sturdily (in one of his introductions) that he does not believe in novels having any moral influence at all; but still Hugo is too much of an artist to let himself be hampered by his dogmas; and the truth is that the artistic result seems, in at least one great instance, to have very little connection with the other, or directly ethical result.

The artistic result of a romance, what is left upon the memory by any really powerful and artistic novel, is something so complicated and refined that it is difficult to put a name upon it; and yet something as simple as nature. These two propositions may seem mutually destructive, but they are so only in appearance. The fact is that art is working far ahead of language as well as of science, realising for us, by all manner of suggestions and exaggerations, effects for which as yet we have no direct name; nay, for which we may never perhaps have a direct name, for the reason that these effects do not enter very largely into the necessities of life. Hence alone is that suspicion of vagueness that often hangs about the purpose of a romance: it is clear enough to us in thought; but we are not used to consider anything clear until we are able to formulate it in words, and analytical language has not been sufficiently shaped to that end. We all know this difficulty in the case of a picture, simple and strong as may be the impression that it has left with us; and it is only because language is the medium of romance, that we are prevented from seeing that the two cases are the same. It is not that there is anything blurred or indefinite in the impression left with us, it is just because the impression is so very definite after its own kind, that we find it hard to fit it exactly with the expressions of our philosophical speech.

It is this idea which underlies and issues from a romance, this some-

thing which it is the function of that form of art to create, this epical value, that I propose chiefly to seek and, as far as may be, to throw into relief, in the present study. It is thus, I believe, that we shall see most clearly the great stride that Hugo has taken beyond his predecessors, and how, no longer content with expressing more or less abstract relations of man to man, he has set before himself the task of realising, in the language of romance, much of the involution of our complicated lives.

This epical value is not to be found, let it be understood, in every so-called novel. The great majority are not works of art in anything but a very secondary signification. One might almost number on one's fingers the works in which such a supreme artistic intention has been in any way superior to the other and lesser aims, themselves more or less artistic, that generally go hand in hand with it in the conception of prose romance. The purely critical spirit is, in most novels, paramount. At the present moment we can recall one man only, for whose works it would have been equally possible to accomplish our present design; and that man is Hawthorne. There is a unity, an unwavering creative purpose, about some at least of Hawthorne's romances, that impresses itself on the most indifferent reader; and the very restrictions and weaknesses of the man served perhaps to strengthen the vivid and single impression of his works. There is nothing of this kind in Hugo: unity, if he attains to it, is indeed unity out of multitude; and it is the wonderful power of subordination and synthesis thus displayed, that gives us the measure of his genius. No amount of mere discussion and statement, such as this, could give a just conception of the greatness of this power. It must be felt in the books themselves, and all that can be done in the present essay is to recall to the reader the more general features of each of the five great romances, hurriedly and imperfectly, as space will permit, and rather as a suggestion than anything more complete.

The moral end that the author had before him in the conception of *Notre Dame de Paris* was (he tells us) to "denounce" the external fatality that hangs over men in the form of foolish and inflexible superstition. To speak plainly, this moral purpose seems to have mighty little to do with the artistic conception; moreover it is very questionably handled, while the artistic conception is developed with the most consummate success. Old Paris lives for us with newness of life: we have ever before our eyes the city cut into three by the two arms of the river, the boat-shaped island "moored" by five bridges to the different shores, and the two unequal towns on either hand. We forget all that enumeration of palaces and churches and convents which occupies so many pages of admirable description, and the thoughtless reader might be inclined to conclude from this, that they were pages thrown away; but this is not so: we forget, indeed, the details, as we forget or do not see the different layers of paint on a completed picture; but the thing desired has been accomplished, and we carry away with us a sense of the "Gothic

profile" of the city, of the "surprising forest of pinnacles and towers and belfries," and we know not what of rich and intricate and quaint. And throughout, Notre Dame has been held up over Paris by a height far greater than that of its twin towers: the Cathedral is present to us from the first page to the last; the title has given us the clue, and already in the Palace of Justice the story begins to attach itself to that central building by character after character. It is purely an effect of mirage; Notre Dame does not, in reality, thus dominate and stand out above the city; and anyone who should visit it, in the spirit of the Scott-tourists to Edinburgh or the Trossachs, would be almost affronted at finding nothing more than this old church thrust away into a corner. It is purely an effect of mirage, as we say; but it is an effect that permeates and possesses the whole book with astonishing consistency and strength. And then, Hugo has peopled this Gothic city, and, above all, this Gothic church, with a race of men even more distinctively Gothic than their surroundings. We know this generation already: we have seen them clustered about the worn capitals of pillars, or craning forth over the church-leads with the open mouths of gurgoyles. About them all, there is that sort of stiff quaint unreality, that conjunction of the grotesque, and even of a certain bourgeois snugness with passionate contortion and horror, that is so characteristic of Gothic art. Esmeralda is somewhat an exception; she and the goat traverse the story like two children who have wandered in a dream. The finest moment of the book is when these two share with the two other leading characters, Dom Claude and Quasimodo, the chill shelter of the old cathedral. It is here that we touch most intimately the generative artistic idea of the romance: are they not all four taken out of some quaint moulding, illustrative of the Beatitudes, or the Ten Commandments, or the seven deadly sins? What is Quasimodo but an animated gurgoyle? What is the whole book but the re-animation of Gothic art?

It is curious that in this, the earliest of the five great romances, there should be so little of that extravagance that latterly we have come almost to identify with the author's manner. There is much melodrama indeed. The scene of the *in-pace*, for example, in spite of its strength, verges dangerously on the province of the penny novelist. But for all that, there is little of the wilfully impossible. Still, even here, there are false notes. I do not believe that Quasimodo rode upon the bell; I should as soon imagine that he swung by the clapper. And again, the following two sentences, out of an otherwise admirable chapter, surely surpass what it has ever entered into the heart of any other man to imagine (vol. ii. p. 180): "Il souffrait tant que par instants il s'arrachait des poignées de cheveux, pour voir s'ils ne blanchissaient pas." And, p. 181: "Ses pensées étaient si insupportables qu'il prenait sa tête à deux mains et tâchait de l'arracher de ses épaules pour la briser sur le pavé."

One other fault, before we pass on. In spite of the horror and misery that pervade all of his later work, there is in it much less of

actual melodrama than here, and rarely, I should say never, that sort of brutality, that useless insufferable violence to the feelings, which is the last distinction between melodrama and true tragedy. Now, in *Notre Dame*, the whole story of Esmeralda's passion for the worthless archer is unpleasant enough; but when she betrays herself in her last hiding-place, herself and her wretched mother, by calling out to this sordid hero who has long since forgotten her—well, that is just one of these things that readers will not forgive; they do not like it, and they are quite right; life is hard enough for poor mortals, without having it indefinitely embittered for them by art.

We look in vain for any similar blemish in *Les Misérables*. Here, on the other hand, there is perhaps the nearest approach to literary restraint that Hugo has ever made: there is here certainly the ripest and most easy development of his powers. It is the moral intention of this great novel to awaken us a little, if it may be—for such awakenings are unpleasant—to the great cost of this society that we enjoy and profit by, to the labour and sweat of those who support the litter, civilisation, in which we ourselves are so smoothly carried forward. People are all glad to shut their eyes; and it gives them a very simple pleasure when they can forget that our laws commit a million individual injustices, to be once roughly just in the general; that the bread that we eat, and the quiet of the family, and all that embellishes life and makes it worth having, have to be purchased by death—by the deaths of animals, and the deaths of men wearied out with labour, and the deaths of those criminals called tyrants and revolutionaries, and the deaths of those revolutionaries called criminals. It is to something of all this that Victor Hugo wishes to open men's eyes in *Les Misérables*; and this moral lesson is worked out in masterly coincidence with the artistic effect. The deadly weight of civilisation to those who are below, presses sensibly on our shoulders as we read. A sort of mocking indignation grows upon us as we find Society rejecting, again and again, the services of the most serviceable; setting Jean Valjean to pick oakum, casting Galileo into prison, crucifying Christ. There is a haunting and horrible sense of insecurity about the book. The terror we thus feel is a terror for the machinery of law, that we can hear in the dark, tearing good and bad between its formidable wheels with the blind stolidity of all machinery, human or divine. This terror incarnates itself sometimes and leaps horribly out upon us; as when the crouching mendicant looks up, and Jean Valjean, in the light of the street lamp, recognises the face of the detective; as when the lantern of the patrol flashes suddenly through the darkness of the sewer; or as when the fugitive comes forth at last at evening, by the quiet riverside, and finds the police there also, waiting stolidly for vice and stolidly satisfied to take virtue instead. The whole book is full of oppression, and full of prejudice, which is the great means of oppression. We have the prejudices of M. Gillenormand, the prejudices of Marius, the prejudices

in revolt that defend the barricade, and the throned prejudices that carry it by storm. And then we have the admirable conception of Javert, the man who had made a religion of the police, and would not survive the moment when he learned that there was another truth outside the truth of laws; a melancholy and a very just creation, over which the reader will do well to ponder.

With so gloomy a design this great work is still full of life and light and love. The portrait of the good Bishop is one of the most agreeable things in modern literature. The whole scene at Montfermeil is full of the charm that Hugo knows so well how to throw about children. Who can forget the passage where Cosette, sent out at night to draw water, stands in admiration before the illuminated booth, and the huckster behind "lui faisait un peu l'effet d'être le Père éternel ?" The pathos of the forlorn sabot laid trustingly by the chimney in expectation of the Santa Claus that was not, takes us fairly by the throat; there is nothing in Shakespeare that touches the heart more nearly. The loves of Cosette and Marius are very pure and pleasant, and we cannot refuse our affection to Gavroche, although we may make a mental reservation of our profound disbelief in his existence. Take it for all in all, there is no book in the world that can be compared with it. There is as much calm and serenity as Hugo has ever attained to; the melodramatic coarsenesses that disfigured *Notre Dame* are no longer present. There is certainly much that is painfully improbable; and again, the story itself is a little too well constructed; it produces on us the effect of a puzzle, and we grow incredulous as we find that every character fits in again and again into the plot, and is, like the child's cube, serviceable on six faces; things are not so well arranged in life as all that comes to. Some of the digressions, also, seem out of place, and do nothing but interrupt and irritate. But when all is said, the book remains of masterly conception and of masterly development, full of pathos, full of truth, full of a high eloquence.

Superstition and social exigency having been thus dealt with in the first two members of the series, it remained for *Les Travailleurs de la Mer* to show man hand to hand with the elements, the last form of external force that is brought against him. And here once more the artistic effect and the moral lesson are worked out together, and are, indeed, one. Gilliat, alone upon the reef at his herculean task, offers a type of human industry in the midst of the vague "diffusion of forces into the illimitable," and the visionary development of "wasted labour" in the sea, and the winds, and the clouds. No character was ever thrown into such strange relief as Gilliat. The great circle of sea-birds that come wonderingly around him on the night of his arrival, strikes at once the note of his pre-eminence and isolation. He fills the whole reef with his indefatigable toil; this solitary spot in the ocean rings with the clamour of his anvil; we see him as he comes and goes, thrown out sharply against the clear background of the sea. And yet his isolation is

not to be compared with the isolation of Robinson Crusoe, for example; indeed, no two books could be more instructive to set side by side than *Les Travailleurs* and this other of the old days before art had learned to occupy itself with aught that lies outside of human will. Crusoe was one sole centre of interest in the midst of a nature utterly dead and utterly unrealised by the artist; but this is not how we feel with Gilliat; we feel that he is opposed by a "dark coalition of forces," that an "immense animosity" surrounds him; we are the witnesses of the terrible warfare that he wages with "the silent inclemency of phenomena going their own way, and the great general law, implacable and passive:" "a conspiracy of the indifferency of things" is against him. There is not one interest on the reef, but two. Just as we recognise Gilliat for the hero, we recognise, as implied by this indifferency of things, this direction of forces to some purpose outside our purposes, yet another character who may almost take rank as the villain of the novel, and the two face up to one another blow for blow, feint for feint, until, in the storm, they fight it epically out, and Gilliat remains the victor;—a victor, however, who has still to encounter the octopus. I need say nothing of the gruesome, repulsive excellence of that famous scene; it will be enough to remind the reader that Gilliat is in pursuit of a crab when he is himself assaulted by the devil fish, and that this, in its way, is the last touch to the inner significance of the book; here, indeed, is the true position of man in the universe.

But in *Les Travailleurs*, with all its strength, with all its eloquence, with all the beauty and fitness of its main situations, we cannot conceal from ourselves that there is a thread of something that will not bear calm scrutiny. There is much that is disquieting about the storm, admirably as it begins. I am very doubtful if it would be possible to keep the boat from foundering in such circumstances, by any amount of breakwater and broken rock. I do not understand the way in which the waves are spoken of, and prefer just to take it as a loose way of speaking, and pass on. And lastly, how does it happen that the sea was quite calm next day? Is this great hurricane a piece of scene-painting after all? And when we have forgiven Gilliat's prodigies of strength (although, in soberness, he reminds us more of Porthos in the Vicomte de Bragelonne than is quite desirable), what is to be said to his suicide, and how are we to condemn in adequate terms that unprincipled avidity after effect, which tells us that the sloop disappeared over the horizon and the head under the water, at one and the same moment? Monsieur Hugo may say what he will, but we know better; we know very well that they did not; a thing like that raises up a despairing spirit of opposition in a man's readers; they give him the lie fiercely, as they read. Lastly, we have here already, some beginning of that curious series of English blunders, that makes us wonder if there are neither proof-sheets nor judicious friends in the whole of France, and affects us sometimes with a sickening uneasiness as to what may be our own exploits when we touch upon foreign countries

and foreign tongues. It is here that we shall find the famous "first of the fourth," and many English words that may be comprehensible perhaps in Paris. It is here that we learn that "laird" in Scotland is the same title as "lord" in England. Here, also, is an account of a Highland soldier's equipment, which we recommend to the lovers of genuine fun.

In *L'Homme qui Rit*, it was Hugo's object to "denounce" (as he would say himself) the aristocratic principle, as it was exhibited in England; and this purpose, somewhat more unmitigatedly satiric than that of the two last, must answer for much that is unpleasant in the book. The repulsiveness of the scheme of the story, and the manner in which it is bound up with impossibilities and absurdities, discourage the reader at the outset, and it needs an effort to take it as seriously as it deserves. And yet when we judge it deliberately, it will be seen that, here again, the story is admirably adapted to the moral. The constructive ingenuity exhibited throughout is almost morbid. Nothing could be more happily imagined, as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the aristocratic principle, than the adventures of Gwynplaine, the itinerant mountebank, snatched suddenly out of his little way of life, and installed without preparation as one of the hereditary legislators of a great country. It is with a very bitter irony that the paper, on which all this depends, is left to float for years at the will of wind and tide. What, again, can be finer in conception than that voice from the people heard suddenly in the House of Lords, in solemn arraignment of the pleasures and privileges of its splendid occupants? The horrible laughter, stamped for ever "by order of the king" upon the face of this strange spokesman of democracy, adds yet another feature of justice to the scene; in all time, travesty has been the argument of oppression; and, in all time, the oppressed might have made this answer: "If I am vile, is it not your system that has made me so?" This ghastly laughter gives occasion, moreover, for the one strain of tenderness running through the web of this unpleasant story: the love of the blind girl, Dea, for the monster. It is a most benignant providence that thus harmoniously brings together these two misfortunes; it is one of these compensations, one of these afterthoughts of a relenting destiny, that reconcile us from time to time to the evil that is in the world; the atmosphere of the book is purified by the presence of this pathetic love; it seems to be above the story somehow, and not of it, as the full moon over the night of some foul and feverish city.

There is here a quality in the narration more intimate and particular than is general with Hugo; but it must be owned, on the other hand, that the book is wordy and even, now and then, a little wearisome. Ursus and his wolf are pleasant enough companions; but the former is nearly as much an abstract type as the latter. There is a beginning, also, of an abuse of conventional conversation, such as may be quite pardonable in the drama where needs must, but is without excuse in the romance. Lastly, I suppose one must say a word or two about the weak points of

this not immaculate novel; and if so, it will be best to distinguish at once. The large family of English blunders, to which we have alluded already in speaking of *Les Travailleurs*, are of a sort that is really indifferent in art. If Shakespeare makes his ships cast anchor by some seaport of Bohemia, if Hugo imagines Tom-Jim-Jack to be a likely nick-name for an English sailor, or if either Shakespeare, or Hugo, or Scott, for that matter, be guilty of "figments enough to confuse the march of a whole history—anachronisms enough to overset all chronology,"* the life of their creations, the artistic truth and accuracy of their work, is not so much as compromised. But when we come upon a passage like the sinking of the Ourque in this romance, we can do nothing but cover our face with our hands: the conscientious reader feels a sort of disgrace in the very reading. For such artistic falsehoods, springing from what I have called already an unprincipled avidity after effect, no amount of blame can be exaggerated; and above all, when the criminal is such a man as Victor Hugo. We cannot forgive in him what we might have passed over in a third-rate sensation novelist. Little as he seems to know of the sea and nautical affairs, he must have known very well that vessels do not go down as he makes the Ourque go down; he must have known that such a liberty with fact was against the laws of the game, and incompatible with all appearance of sincerity in conception or workmanship.

In each of these books, one after another, there has been some departure from the traditional canons of romance; but taking each separately, one would have feared to make too much of these departures, or to found any theory upon what was perhaps purely accidental. The appearance of *Quatre Vingt Treize* has put us out of the region of such doubt. Like a doctor who has long been hesitating how to classify an epidemic malady, we have come at last upon a case so well marked that our uncertainty is at an end. It is a novel built upon "a sort of enigma," which was at that date laid before revolutionary France, and which is presented by Hugo to Tellmarch, to Lantenac, to Gauvain, and very terribly to Cimourdain, each of whom gives his own solution of the question, clement or stern, according to the temper of his spirit. That enigma was this: "Can a good action be a bad action? Does not he who spares the wolf kill the sheep?" This question, as I say, meets with one answer after another during the course of the book, and yet seems to remain undecided to the end. And something in the same way, although one character, or one set of characters, after another comes to the front and occupies our attention for the moment, we never identify our interest with any of these temporary heroes, nor regret them after they are withdrawn. We soon come to regard them somewhat as special cases of a general law; what we really care for is something that they only imply and body forth to us. We know how history continues through

* Prefatory letter to "Peveril of the Peak."

century after century; how this king or that patriot disappears from its pages with his whole generation, and yet we do not cease to read, nor do we even feel as if we had reached any legitimate conclusion, because our interest is not in the men, but in the country that they loved or hated, benefited or injured. And so it is here: Gauvain and Cimourdain pass away, and we regard them no more than the lost armies of which we find the cold statistics in military annals; what we regard is what remains behind; it is the principle that put these men where they were, that filled them for a while with heroic inspiration, and has the power, now that they are fallen, to inspire others with the same courage. The interest of the novel centres about revolutionary France: just as the plot is an abstract judicial difficulty, the hero is an abstract historical force. And this has been done, not, as it would have been before, by the cold and cumbersome machinery of allegory, but with bold, straightforward realism, dealing only with the objective materials of art, but dealing with them so masterfully that the palest abstractions of thought come before us, and move our hopes and fears, as if they were the young men and maidens of customary romance.

The episode of the mother and children in *Quatre Vingt Treize* is equal to anything that Hugo has ever written. There is one chapter in the second volume, for instance, called "*Sein guéri, cœur saignant*," that is full of the very stuff of true tragedy, and nothing could be more delightful than the humours of the three children on the day before the assault. The passage on La Vendée is really great, and the scenes in Paris have much of the same broad merit. The book is full, as usual, of pregnant and splendid sayings. But when thus much is conceded by way of praise, we come to the other scale of the balance, and find this, also, somewhat heavy. There is here a yet greater over-employment of conventional dialogue than in *L'Homme qui Rit*; and much that should have been said by the author himself, if it were to be said at all, he has most unwarrantably put into the mouths of one or other of his characters. We should like to know what becomes of the main body of the troop in the wood of La Saudraie during the thirty pages or so in which the foreguard lays aside all discipline, and stops to gossip over a woman and some children. We have an unpleasant idea forced upon us at one place, in spite of all the good-natured incredulity that we can summon up to resist it. Is it possible that Monsieur Hugo thinks they ceased to steer the corvette while the gun was loose? Of the chapter in which Lantenac and Halmalho are alone together in the boat, the less said the better; of course, if there were nothing else, they would have been swamped thirty times over during the course of Lantenac's harangue. Again, after Lantenac has landed, we have scenes of almost inimitable workmanship that suggest the epithet "statuesque" by their clear and trenchant outline; but the tocsin scene will not do, and the tocsin unfortunately pervades the whole passage, ringing continually in our ears with a taunting accusation of falsehood. And then, when we come to

the place where Lantenac meets the royalists, under the idea that he is going to meet the republicans, it seems as if there were a hitch in the stage mechanism. I have tried it over in every way, and I cannot conceive any disposition that would make the scene possible as narrated.

Such then, with their faults and their signal excellences, are the five great novels.

Romance is a language in which many persons learn to speak with a certain appearance of fluency; but there are few who can ever bend it to any practical need, few who can ever be said to express themselves in it. It has become abundantly plain in the foregoing examination that Victor Hugo occupies a high place among those few. He has always a perfect command over his stories; and we see that they are constructed with a high regard to some ulterior purpose, and that every situation is informed with moral significance and grandeur. Of no other man can the same thing be said in the same degree. His romances are not to be confused with "the novel with a purpose," as familiar to the English reader: this is generally the model of incompetence; and we see the moral clumsily forced into every hole and corner of the story, or thrown externally over it like a carpet over a railing. Now the moral significance, with Hugo, is of the essence of the romance; it is the organising principle. If you could somehow despoil *Les Misérables* or *Les Travailleurs* of their distinctive lesson, you would find that the story had lost its interest and the book was dead.

Having thus learned to subordinate his story to an idea, to make his art speak, he went on to teach it to say things heretofore unaccustomed. If you look back at the five books of which we have now so hastily spoken, you will be astonished at the freedom with which the original purposes of story-telling have been laid aside and passed by. Where are now the two lovers who descended the main watershed of all the Waverley novels, and all the novels that have tried to follow in their wake? Sometimes they are almost lost sight of before the solemn isolation of a man against the sea and sky, as in *Les Travailleurs*; sometimes, as in *Les Misérables*, they merely figure for awhile, as a beautiful episode in the epic of oppression; sometimes they are entirely absent, as in *Quatre Vingt Treize*. There is no hero in *Notre Dame*: in *Les Misérables* it is an old man: in *L'Homme qui Rit* it is a monster: in *Quatre Vingt Treize* it is the Revolution. Those elements that only began to show themselves timidly, as adjuncts, in the novels of Walter Scott, have usurped ever more and more of the canvas; until we find the whole interest of one of Hugo's romances centering around matter that Fielding would have banished from his altogether, as being out of the field of fiction. So we have elemental forces occupying nearly as large a place, playing (so to speak) nearly as important a *rôle*, as the man, Gilliat, who opposes and overcomes them. So we find the fortunes of a nation put upon the stage with as much vividness as ever before the fortunes of a village

maiden or a lost heir; and the forces that oppose and corrupt a principle holding the attention quite as strongly as the wicked barons or dishonest attorneys of the past. Hence those individual interests that were supreme in Fielding, and even in Scott stood out over everything else and formed as it were the spine of the story, figure here only as one set of interests among many sets, one force among many forces, one thing to be treated out of a whole world of things equally vivid and important. So that, for Hugo, man is no longer an isolated spirit without antecedent or relation here below, but a being involved in the action and reaction of natural forces, himself a centre of such action and reaction; or an unit in a great multitude, chased hither and thither by epidemic terrors and aspirations, and, in all seriousness, blown about by every wind of doctrine. This is a long way that we have travelled: between such work and the work of Fielding is there not, indeed, a great gulph in thought and sentiment?

Art, thus conceived, realises for men a larger portion of life, and that portion one that it is more difficult for them to realise unaided; and, besides helping them to feel more intensely those restricted personal interests which are patent to all, it awakes in them some consciousness of those more general relations that are so strangely invisible to the average man in ordinary moods. It helps to keep man in his place in nature, and, above all, it helps him to understand more intelligently the responsibilities of his place in society. And in all this generalisation of interest, we never miss those small humanities that are at the opposite pole of excellence in art; and while we admire the intellect that could see life thus largely, we are touched with another sentiment for the tender heart that slipped the piece of gold into Cosette's sabot, that was virginally troubled at the fluttering of her dress in the spring wind, or put the blind girl beside the deformity of the laughing man. This, then, is the last praise that we can award to these romances. The author has shown a power of just subordination hitherto unequalled; and as, in reaching forward to one class of effects, he has not been forgetful or careless of the other, his work is more nearly complete work, and his art, with all its imperfections, deals more comprehensively with the materials of life than that of any of his otherwise more sure and masterly predecessors.

These five books would have made a very great fame for any writer, and yet they are but one façade of the splendid monument that Victor Hugo has erected to his own genius. Everywhere we find somewhat the same greatness, somewhat the same infirmities. In his poems and plays there are the same unaccountable protervities that have already astonished us in the romances. There, too, is the same feverish strength, welding the fiery iron of his idea under forge-hammer repetitions; an emphasis that is somehow akin to weakness; a strength that is a little epileptic. He stands so far above all his contemporaries, and so incomparably excels them in richness, breadth, variety, and moral earnestness, that we almost feel as if he had a sort of right to fall oftener and more heavily than others; but this does not reconcile us to seeing

him profit by the privilege so freely. We like to have, in our great men, something that is above question; we like to place an implicit faith in them, and see them always on the platform of their greatness: and this, unhappily, cannot be with Hugo. As Heine said long ago, his is a genius somewhat deformed; but, deformed as it is, we accept it gladly; we shall have the wisdom to see where his foot slips, but we shall have the justice also to recognise in him the greatest artist of our generation, and, in many ways, one of the greatest artists of all time. If we look back, yet once, upon these five romances, we see blemishes such as we can lay to the charge of no other man in the number of the famous; but to what other man can we attribute such sweeping innovations, such a new and significant view of life and man, such an amount, if we think of the amount merely, of equally consummate performance?

A Rose in June.

CHAPTER XVI.

When Rose found herself, after so strange and exciting a journey, within the tranquil shades of Miss Margetts' establishment for young ladies, it would be difficult to tell the strange hush which fell upon her. Almost before the door had closed upon Wodehouse, while still the rumble of the hansom in which he had brought her to her destination, and in which he now drove away, was in her ears, the hush, the chill, the tranquillity had begun to influence her. Miss Margetts, of course, was not up at half-past six on the summer morning, and it was an early housemaid, curious but drowsy, who admitted Rose, and took her, having some suspicion of so unusually early a visitor, with so little luggage, to the bare and forbidding apartment in which Miss Margetts generally received her "parents." The window looked out upon the little garden in front of the house, and the high wall which enclosed it; and there Rose seated herself to wait, all the energy and passion which had sustained, beginning to fail her, and dreary doubts of what her old schoolmistress would say, and how she would receive her, filling her very soul. How strange is the stillness of the morning within such a populated house! nothing stirring but the faint far-off noises in the kitchen —and she alone, with the big blank walls about her, feeling, like a prisoner, as if she had been shut in to undergo some sentence. To be sure, in other circumstances this was just the moment which Rose would have chosen to be alone, and in which the recollection of the scene just ended, the words which she had heard, the looks that had been bent upon her, ought to have been enough to light up the dreariest place, and make her unconscious of external pallor and vacancy. But although the warmest sense of personal happiness which she had ever known in her life had come upon the girl all unawares ere she came here, yet the circumstances were so strange, and the complication of feeling so great, that all the light seemed to die out of the landscape when Edward left her. This very joy which had come to her so unexpectedly gave a different aspect to all the rest of her story. To fly from a marriage which was disagreeable to her, with no warmer wish than that of simply escaping from it, was one thing; but to fly with the aid of a lover who made the flight an occasion of declaring himself was another and very different matter. Her heart sank while she thought of the story she had to tell. Should she dare tell Miss Margetts about Edward? About Mr. Incledon it seemed now simple enough.

Miss Margetts was a kind woman, or one of her "young ladies" would

not have thought of flying back to her for shelter in trouble; but she was always a little rigid and "particular," and when she heard Rose's story (with the careful exclusion of Edward) her mind was very much disturbed. She was sorry for the girl, but felt sure that her mother must be in the right, and trembled a little in the midst of her decorum to consider what the world would think if she was found to receive girls who set themselves in opposition to their lawful guardians. "Was the gentleman not nice?" she asked, doubtfully; "was he very old? were his morals not what they ought to be? or has he any personal peculiarity which made him unpleasant? Except in the latter case, when indeed one must judge for one's self, I think you might have put full confidence in your excellent mother's judgment."

"Oh, it was not that; he is very good and nice," said Rose, confused and troubled. "It is not that I object to him; it is because I do not love him. How could I marry him when I don't care for him? But he is not a man to whom anybody could object."

"And he is rich, and fond of you, and not too old? I fear—I fear, my dear child, you have been very inconsiderate. You would soon have learned to love so good a man."

"Oh, Miss Anne," said Rose (for there were two sisters and this was the youngest), "don't say so, please! I never could if I should live a hundred years."

"You will not live a hundred years; but you might have tried. Girls are pliable; or at least people think so; perhaps my particular position in respect to them makes me less sure of this than most people are. But still that is the common idea. You would have learned to be fond of him if he were fond of you; unless, indeed——"

"Unless what?" cried Rose, intent upon suggestion of excuse.

"Unless," said Miss Margetts, solemnly, fixing her with the penetrating glance of an eye accustomed to command—"unless there is another gentleman in the case—unless you have allowed another image to enter your heart?"

Rose was unpreparod for such an appeal. She answered it only by a scared look, and hid her face in her hands.

"Perhaps it will be best to have some breakfast," said Miss Margetts. "You must have been up very early to be here so soon; and I daresay you did not take anything before you started, not even a cup of tea?"

Rose had to avow this lack of common prudence, and try to eat docilely to please her protector; but the attempt was not very successful. A single night's watching is often enough to upset a youthful frame not accustomed to anything of the kind, and Rose was glad beyond description to be taken to one of the little white-curtained chambers which were so familiar to her, and left there to rest. How inconceivable it was that she should be there again! Her very familiarity with everything made the wonder greater. Had she never left that still well-ordered place at all? or what strange current had drifted her back again? She lay down on

the little white dimity bed, much too deeply affected with her strange position, she thought, to rest; but ere long had fallen fast asleep, poor child, with her hands clasped across her breast, and tears trembling upon her eyelashes. Miss Margetts, being a kind soul, was deeply touched when she looked into the room and found her so, and immediately went back to her private parlour and scored an adjective or two out of the letter she had written—a letter to Rose's mother, telling how startled she had been to find herself made unawares the confidant of the runaway, and begging Mrs. Damerel to believe that it was no fault of hers, though she assured her in the same breath that every attention should be paid to Rose's health and comfort. Mrs. Damerel would thus have been very soon relieved from her suspense, even if she had not received the despairing little epistle sent to her by Rose. Of Rose's note, however, her mother took no immediate notice. She wrote to Miss Margetts, thanking her, and assuring her that she was only too glad to think that her child was in such good hands. But she did not write to Rose. No one wrote to Rose; she was left for three whole days without a word, for even Wodehouse did not venture to send the glowing epistles which he wrote by the score, having an idea that an establishment for young ladies is a kind of Castle Dangerous, in which such letters as his would never be suffered to reach their proper owner, and might prejudice her with her jailors. These dreary days were dreary enough for all of them—for the mother, who was not so perfectly assured of being right in her mode of treatment as to be quite at ease on the subject; for the young lover, burning with impatience, and feeling every day to be a year; and for Rose herself, thus dropped into the stillness away from all that had excited and driven her desperate. To be delivered all at once out of even trouble which is of an exciting and stimulating character, and buried in absolute quiet, is a doubtful advantage in any case, at least to youth. Mr. Incledon bore the interval, not knowing all that was involved in it, with more calm than any of the others. He was quite amenable to Mrs. Damerel's advice not to disturb the girl with letters. After all what was a week to a man secure of Rose's company for the rest of his life? He smiled a little at the refuge which her mother's care (he thought) had chosen for her—her former school! and wondered how his poor little Rose liked it; but otherwise was perfectly tranquil on the subject. As for poor young Wodehouse, he was to be seen about the railway station, every train that arrived from London, and haunted the precincts of the White House for news, and was as miserable as a young man in love and terrible uncertainty—with only ten days in which to satisfy himself about his future life and happiness, could be. What wild thoughts went through his mind as he answered "yes" and "no" to his mother's talk, and dutifully took walks with her, and called with her upon her friends, hearing Rose's approaching marriage everywhere talked of, and the "good luck" of the Rector's family remarked upon! His heart was tormented by all these conversations, yet it was better to hear them, than to be out of the way of hearing altogether. Gretna Green,

if Gretna Green should be feasible, was the only way he could think of, to get delivered from this terrible complication; and then it haunted him that Gretna Green had been "done away with," though he could not quite remember how. Ten days! and then the China seas for three long years; though Rose had not been able to conceal from him that he it was whom she loved, and not Mr. Incledon. Poor fellow! in his despair he thought of deserting, of throwing up his appointment and losing all his chances in life; and all these wild thoughts swayed upwards to a climax in the three days. He determined on the last of these that he would bear it no longer. He put a passionate letter in the post, and resolved to beard Mrs. Damerel in the morning and have it out.

More curious still, and scarcely less bewildering, was the strange trance of suspended existence in which Rose spent these three days. It was but two years since she had left Miss Margetts', and some of her friends were there still. She was glad to meet them, as much as she could be glad of anything in her preoccupied state, but felt the strangest difference—a difference which she was totally incapable of putting into words, between them and herself. Rose, without knowing it, had made a huge stride in life since she had left their bare school-room. I daresay her education might with much advantage have been carried on a great deal longer than it was, and that her power of thinking might have increased, and her mind been much improved, had she been sent to college afterwards as boys are, and as some people think girls ought to be; but though she had not been to college, education of a totally different kind had been going on for Rose. She had made a step in life which carried her altogether beyond the placid region in which the other girls lived and worked. She was in the midst of problems which Euclid cannot touch, nor logic solve. She had to exercise choice in a matter concerning other lives as well as her own. She had to decide unaided between a true and a false moral duty, and to make up her mind which was true and which was false. She had to discriminate in what point Inclination ought to be considered a rule of conduct, and in what points it ought to be crushed as mere self-seeking; or whether it should not always be crushed, which was her mother's code; or if it ought to have supreme weight, which was her father's practice. This is not the kind of training which youth can get from schools, whether in Miss Margetts' establishment for young ladies, or even in learned Balliol. Rose, who had been subjected to it, felt, but could not tell why, as if she were years and worlds removed from the school and its duties. She could scarcely help smiling at the elder girls with their "deep" studies and their books, which were far more advanced intellectually than Rose. Oh, how easy the hardest grammar was, the difficulties of Goethe, or of Dante (or even of Thucydides or Perseus, but these she did not know), in comparison with this difficulty which tore her asunder! Even the moral and religious truths in which she had been trained from her cradle scarcely helped her. The question was one to be decided for herself and by herself, and by her for her alone.

And here is the question, dear reader, as the girl had to decide it. Self-denial is the rule of Christianity. It is the highest and noblest of duties when exercised for a true end. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." Thus it has the highest sanction which any duty can have, and it is the very life and breath and essence of Christianity. This being the rule, is there one special case excepted in which you ought not to deny yourself? and is this case the individual one of Marriage? Allowing that in all other matters it is right to sacrifice your own wishes where by doing so you benefit others, is it right to sacrifice your love and happiness in order to please your friends, and make a man happy who loves you, but whom you do not love? According to Mrs. Damerel this was so, and the sacrifice of a girl who made a loveless marriage for a good purpose, was as noble as any other martyrdom for the benefit of country or family or race. Gentle reader, if you do not skip the statement of the question altogether, you will probably decide it summarily and wonder at Rose's indecision. But hers was no such easy way of dealing with the problem, which I agree with her in thinking is much harder than anything in Euclid. She was not by any means sure that this amount of self-sacrifice was not a duty. Her heart divined, her very intellect felt, without penetrating, a fallacy somewhere in the argument; but still the argument was very potent and not to be got over. She was not sure that to listen to Edward Wodehouse, and to suffer even an unguarded reply to drop from her lips, was not a sin. She was far from being sure that in any case it is safe or right to do what you like; and to do what you like in contradiction to your mother, to your engagement, to your plighted word—what could that be but a sin? She employed all her simple logic on the subject with little effect, for in strict logic she was bound over to marry Mr. Incledon, and now more than ever her heart resolved against marrying Mr. Incledon. This question worked in her mind, presenting itself in every possible phase—now one side, now the other. And she dared not consult any one near, and none of those who were interested in its solution took any notice of her. She was left alone in unbroken stillness to judge for herself, to make her own conclusion. The first day she was still occupied with the novelty of her position—the fatigue and excitement of leaving home, and of all that had occurred since. The second day she was still strangely moved by the difference between herself and her old friends, and the sense of having passed beyond them into regions unknown to their philosophy, and from which she never could come back to the unbroken tranquillity of a girl's life. But on the third day the weight of her strange position weighed her down utterly. She watched the distribution of the letters with eyes growing twice their natural size, and a pang indescribable at her heart. Did they mean to leave her alone then? to take no further trouble about her? to let her do as she liked, that melancholy privilege which is prized only by those who do not possess it? Had Edward forgotten her though he had said so much two days ago? had her mother cast her off, despising her, as a

rebel? Even Mr. Incledon, was he going to let her be lost to him without an effort? Rose had fled hoping (she believed) for nothing so much as to lose herself and be heard of no more; but oh! the heaviness which drooped over her very soul when for three days she was let alone. Wonder, consternation, indignation, arose one after another in her heart. They had all abandoned her. The lover whom she loved, and the lover whom she did not love, alike. What was love then? a mere fable, a thing which perished when the object of it was out of sight? When she had time to think, indeed, she found this theory untenable, for had not Edward been faithful to her at the other end of the world? and yet what did he mean now?

On the third night Rose threw herself on her bed in despair, and sobbed till midnight. Then a mighty resolution arose in her mind. She would relieve herself of the burden. She would go to the fountain head, to Mr. Incledon himself, and lay the whole long tale before him. He was good, he was just, he had always been kind to her; she would abide by what he said. If he insisted that she should marry him, she must do so; better that than to be thrown off by everybody, to be left for days or perhaps for years alone in Miss Margetts'. And if he were generous, and decided otherwise! In that case neither Mrs. Damerel nor any one else could have anything to say—she would put it into his hands.

She had her hat on when she came down to breakfast next morning, and her face, though pale, had a little resolution in it, better than the despondency of the first three days. "I am going home," she said, as the schoolmistress looked at her surprised.

"It is the very best thing you can do, my dear," said Miss Margetts, giving her a more cordial kiss than usual. "I did not like to advise it; but it is the very best thing you can do."

Rose took her breakfast meekly, not so much comforted as Miss Margetts had intended by this approval. Somehow she felt as if it must be against her own interest since Miss Margetts approved of it, and she was in twenty minds then not to go. When the letters came in she said to herself that there could be none for her, and went and stood at the window, turning her back that she might not see; and it was while she was standing thus, pretending to gaze out upon the high wall covered with ivy, that, in the usual contradiction of human affairs, Edward Wodehouse's impassioned letter was put into her hands. There she read how he too had made up his mind not to bear it longer; how he was going to her mother to have an explanation with her. Should she wait for the result of this explanation, or should she carry out her own determination and go?

"Come, Rose, I will see you safely to the station; there is a cab at the door," said Miss Margetts.

Rose turned round her eyes dewy and moist with those tears of love and consolation which refresh and do not scorch as they come. She looked up timidly to see whether she might ask leave to stay; but the cab was waiting, and Miss Margetts was ready, and her own

hat on and intention declared: she was ashamed to turn back when she had gone so far. She said good-bye accordingly to the elder sister, and meekly followed Miss Anne into the cab. Had it been worth while winding herself up to the resolution of flight for so little? Was her first experiment of resistance really over, and the rebel going home, with arms grounded and banners trailing? It was ignominious beyond all expression—but what was she to do?

"My dear," said Miss Margetts, in the cab, which jolted very much and now and then took away her breath, "I hope you are going with your mind in a better frame, and disposed to pay attention to what your good mother says. *She* must know best. Try and remember this, whatever happens. You ought to say it to yourself all the way down as a penance, 'My mother knows best.'"

"But how can she know best what I am feeling?" said Rose. "It must be myself who must judge of that."

"You may be sure she knows a great deal more, and has given more thought to it than you suppose," said the schoolmistress. "Dear child, make me happy by promising that you will follow her advice."

Rose made no promise, but her heart sank as she thus set out upon her return journey. It was less terrible when she found herself alone in the railway carriage, and yet it was more terrible as she realised what desperation had driven her to. She was going back as she went away with no question decided, no resolution come to, with only new complications to encounter, without the expedient of flight, which could not be repeated. Ought she not to have been more patient, to have tried to put up with silence? That could not have lasted for ever. But now she was going to put herself back in the very heart of the danger, with no ground gained, but something lost. Well! she said to herself, at least it would be over. She would know the worst, and there would be no further appeal against it. If happiness was over too, she would have nothing to do in all the life before her—nothing to do but to mourn over the loss of it, and teach herself to do without it; and suspense would be over. She got out of the carriage, pulling her veil over her face, and took an unfrequented path which led away across the fields to the road near Whitton, quite out of reach of the Green and all its inhabitants. It was a long walk, but the air and the movement did her good. She went on swiftly and quietly, her whole mind bent upon the interview she was going to seek. All beyond was a blank to her. This one thing, evident and definite, seemed to fix and to clear her dazzled eyesight. She met one or two acquaintances, but they did not recognise her through her veil, though she saw them, and recollected them ever after, as having had something to do with that climax and agony of her youth; and thus Rose reached Whitton, with its soft abundant summer woods, and, her heart beating louder and louder, hastened her steps as she drew near her destination, almost running across the park to Mr. Incledon's door.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Rose! is it possible?" he cried.

She was standing in the midst of that great, luxurious, beautiful drawing-room, of which he hoped she was to be the queen and mistress, her black dress breaking harshly upon all the soft harmony of neutral tints around. Her face, which he saw in the glass as he entered the room, was framed in the large veil which she had thrown back over her hat, and which drooped down on her shoulders on either side. She was quite pale—her cheeks blanched out of all trace of colour, with something of that chilled and spiritual light which sometimes appears in the colourless clearness of the sky after a storm. Her eyes were larger than usual, and had a dilated exhausted look. Her face was full of a speechless, silent eagerness—eagerness which could wait, yet was almost beyond the common artifices of concealment. Her hands were softly clasped together, with a certain eloquence in their close pressure, supporting each other. All this Mr. Incledon saw in the glass before he could see her; and, though he went in with lively and joyful animation, the sight startled him a little. He came forward, however, quite cheerfully, though his heart failed him, and took the clasped hands into his. "I did not look for such a bright interruption to a dull morning," he said; "but what a double pleasure it is to see you here! How good of you to come to bring me the happy news of your return!"

"Mr. Incledon," she said hastily, "oh! do not be glad—don't say I am good. I have come to you first without seeing mamma. I have come to say a great deal—a very great deal—to you; and to ask—your advice;—and if you will tell me—what to do."

Her voice sank quite low before these final words were said.

"My darling," he said, "you are very serious and solemn. What can you want advice about? But whatever it is, you have a right to the very best I can give you. Let me hear what the difficulty is. Here is a chair for you—one of your own choice, the new ones. Tell me if you think it comfortable; and then tell me what this terrible difficulty is."

"Oh, don't take it so lightly," said Rose, "please don't. I am very, very unhappy, and I have determined to tell you everything and to let you judge for me. You have the best right."

"Thanks for saying so," he said, with a smile, kissing her hand. He thought she meant that as she was so surely his, it was naturally his part to think for her and help her in everything. What so natural? And then he awaited her disclosure, still smiling, expecting some innocent dilemma, such as would be in keeping with her innocent looks. He could not understand her, nor the gravity of the appeal to him which she had come to make.

"Oh, Mr. Incledon!" cried Rose, "if you knew what I meant you would not smile—you would not take it so easily. I have come to tell

you everything—how I have lied to you and been a cheat and a deceiver. Oh! don't laugh! you don't know—you don't know how serious it is!"

"Nay, dear child," he said, "do you want to frighten me? for if you do, you must think of something more likely than that you are a cheat and deceiver. Come now, I will be serious—as serious as a judge. Tell me what it is, Rose."

"It is about you and me," she said suddenly, after a little pause.

"Ah!"—this startled him for the first time. His grasp tightened upon her hand; but he used no more endearing words. "Go on," he said, softly.

"May I begin at the beginning? I should like to tell you everything. When you first spoke to me, Mr. Incledon, I told you there was some one—"

"Ah!" cried Mr. Incledon again, still more sharply, "he is here now. You have seen him since he came back?"

"It is not that," said Rose. "Oh! let me tell you from the beginning. I said then that he had never said anything to me. I could not tell you his name because I did not know what his feelings were—only my own, of which I was ashamed. Mr. Incledon, have patience with me a little. Just before he went away he came to the Rectory to say good-bye. He sent up a message to ask me to come down, but mamma went down instead. Then his mother sent me a little note, begging me to go to bid him good-bye. It was while papa was ill; he held my hand, and would not let me. I begged him, only for a minute; but he held my hand and would not let me go. I had to sit there and listen, and hear the door open and shut, and then steps in the hall and on the gravel, and then mamma coming slowly back again, as if nothing had happened, upstairs and along the corridor. Oh! I thought she was walking on my heart!"

Rose's eyes were so full that she did not see how her listener looked. He held her hand still, but with his disengaged hand he partially covered his face.

"Then after that," she resumed, pausing for breath, "all our trouble came. I did not seem to care for anything. It is dreadful to say it—and I never did say it till now—but I don't think I felt so unhappy as I ought about poor papa; I was so unhappy before. It did not break my heart as grief ought to do. I was only dull—dull—miserable, and did not care for anything; but then everybody was unhappy; and there was good reason for it, and no one thought of me. It went on like that till you came."

Here he stirred a little and grasped her hand more tightly. What she had said hitherto had not been pleasant to him; but yet it was all before he had made his appearance as her suitor—all innocent, visionary—the very romance of youthful liking. Such an early dream of the dawning any man, even the most rigid, might forgive to his bride.

"You came—oh! Mr. Incledon, do not be angry—I want to tell you everything. If it vexes you and hurts you, will you mind? You came; and mamma told me that same night. Oh, how frightened I was and

miserable! Everything seemed to turn round with me. She said you loved me, and that you were very good and very kind (but that I knew), and would do so much for the boys and be a comfort and help to her in our great poverty." At these words he stirred again and loosened, but did not quite let go, his grasp of her hand. Rose was, without knowing it, acting like a skilful surgeon, cutting deep and sharp, that the pain might be over the sooner. He leaned his head on his other hand, turning it away from her, and from time to time stirred unconsciously when the sting was too much for him, but did not speak. "And she said more than this. Oh, Mr. Incledon! I must tell you everything, as if you were my own heart. She told me that papa had not been—considerate for us, as he should have been; that he liked his own way and his own pleasure best; and that I was following him—that I was doing the same—ruining the boys' prospects and prolonging our great poverty, because I did not want to marry you, though you had promised to help them and set everything right."

Mr. Incledon dropped Rose's hand; he turned half away from her, supporting his head upon both of his hands, so that she did not see his face. She did not know how cruel she was, nor did she mean to be cruel, but simply historical, telling him everything, as if she had been speaking to her own heart.

"Then I saw you," said Rose, "and told you—or else I thought I told you—and you did not mind, but would not, though I begged you, give up. And everything went on for a long, long time. Sometimes I was very wretched; sometimes my heart felt quite dull, and I did not seem to mind what happened. Sometimes I forgot for a little while—and oh! Mr. Incledon, now and then, though I tried very hard, I could not help thinking of—him. I never did when I could help it; but sometimes when I saw the lights on Ankermead, or remembered something he had said—And all this time mamma would talk to me of people who prefer their own will to the happiness of others; of all the distress and misery it brought when we indulged ourselves and our whims and fancies; of how much better it was to do what was right than what we liked. My head got confused sometimes, and I felt as if she was wrong, but I could not put it into words; for how could it be right to deceive a good man like you—to let you give your love for nothing, and marry you without caring for you? But I am not clever enough to argue with mamma. Once, I think, for a minute, I got the better of her; but when she told me that I was preferring my own will to everybody's happiness, it went to my heart, and what could I say? Do you remember the day when it was all settled at last and made up?"

This was more than the poor man could bear. He put up one hand with a wild gesture to stop her and uttered a hoarse exclamation; but Rose was too much absorbed in her story to stop.

"The night before I had gone down into the Rectory garden, where he and I used to talk, and there I said good-bye to him in my heart, and

made a kind of grave over him, and gave him up for ever and ever—oh! don't you know how?" said Rose, the tears dropping on her black dress. "Then I was willing that it should be settled how you pleased; and I never, never allowed myself to think of him any more. When he came into my head, I went to the schoolroom, or I took a hard bit of music, or I talked to mamma, or heard Patty her lessons. I would not, because I thought it would be wicked to you, and you so good to me, Mr. Incledon. Oh! if you had only been my brother, or my—cousin (she had almost said, father or uncle, but by good luck forbore), how fond I should have been of you!—and I am fond of you," said Rose, softly proffering the hand which he had put away, and laying it gently upon his arm. He shook his head, and made a little gesture as if to put it off, but yet the touch and the words went to his heart.

"Now comes the worst of all," said Rose. "I know it will hurt you, and yet I must tell you. After that there came the news of Uncle Edward's death; and that he had left his money to us, and that we were well off again—better than we had ever been. Oh, forgive me! forgive me!" she said, clasping his arm with both her hands, "when I heard it, it seemed to me all in a moment that I was free. Mamma said that all the sacrifices we had been making would be unnecessary henceforward; what she meant was the things we had been doing—dusting the rooms, putting the table straight, helping in the house—oh! as if these could be called sacrifices! but I thought she meant me. You are angry—you are angry!" said Rose. "I could not expect anything else. But it was not you, Mr. Incledon; it was that I hated to be married. I could not—could not make up my mind to it. I turned into a different creature when I thought that I was free."

The simplicity of the story disarmed the man, sharp and bitter as was the sting and mortification of listening to this too artless tale. "Poor child! poor child!" he murmured, in a softer tone, unclasping the delicate fingers from his arm; and then, with an effort, "I am not angry. Go on; let me hear it to the end."

"When mamma saw how glad I was, she stopped it all at once," said Rose, controlling herself. "She said I was just the same as ever—always self-indulgent, thinking of myself, not of others—and that I was as much bound as ever by honour. There was no longer any question of the boys, or of help to the family; but she said honour was just as much to be considered, and that I had pledged my word——"

"Rose," quietly said Mr. Incledon, "spare me what you can of these discussions—you had pledged your word?"

She drew away half frightened, not expecting the harsher tone in his voice, though she had expected him to "be angry," as she said. "Forgive me," she went on, subdued, "I was so disappointed that it made me wild. I did not know what to do. I could not see any reason for it now—any good in it; and, at last, when I was almost crazy with thinking, I—ran away."

"You ran away?"—Mr. Incledon raised his head, indignant. "Your mother has lied all round," he said, fiercely; then, bethinking himself, "I beg your pardon. Mrs. Damerel no doubt had her reasons for what she said."

"There was only one place I could go to," said Rose, timidly, "Miss Margetts', where I was at school. I went up to the station for the early train that nobody might see me. I was very much frightened. Some one was standing there; I did not know who he was—he came by the train, I think; but after I had got into the carriage he came in after me. Mr. Incledon! it was not his fault, neither his nor mine. I had not been thinking of him. It was not for him, but only not to be married—to be free ——"

"Of me," he said, with a bitter smile; "but, in short, you met, whether by intention or not—and Mr. Wodehouse took advantage of his opportunities?"

"He told me," said Rose, not looking at Mr. Incledon, "what I had known ever so long without being told; but I said nothing to him; what could I say? I told him all that had happened. He took me to Miss Margetts', and there we parted," said Rose, with a momentary pause and a deep sigh. "Since then I have done nothing but think and think. No one has come near me—no one has written to me. I have been left alone to go over and over it all in my own mind. I have done so till I was nearly mad, or at least, everything seemed going round with me and everything confused, and I could not tell what was right and what was wrong. Oh!" cried Rose, lifting her head in natural eloquence, with eyes which looked beyond him, and a certain elevation and abstraction in her face, "I don't think it is a thing in which only right and wrong are to be considered. When you love one and do not love another, it must mean something; and to marry unwillingly, that is nothing to content a man. It is a wrong to him; it is not doing right; it is treating him unkindly, cruelly! It is as if he wanted you, anyhow, like a cat or a dog; not as if he wanted you worthily, as his companion." Rose's courage failed her after this little outburst; her high looks came down, her voice sank and faltered, her head drooped. She rose up, and clasping her hands together, went on in low tones: "Mr. Incledon, I am engaged to you; I belong to you. I trust your justice and your kindness more than any thing else. If you say I am to marry you, I will do it. Take it now into your own hands. If I think of it any more I will go mad; but I will do whatever you say."

He was walking up and down the room, with his face averted, and with pain and anger and humiliation in his heart. All this time he had believed he was leading Rose towards the reasonable love for him which was all he hoped for. He had supposed himself in almost a lofty position, offering to this young, fresh, simple creature more in every way than she could ever have had but for him—a higher position, a love more noble than any foolish boy-and-girl attachment. To find out in a moment how very

different the real state of the case had been, and to have conjured up before him the picture of a martyr-girl, weeping and struggling, and a mother "with a host of petty maxims preaching down her daughter's heart," was intolerable to him. He had never been so mortified, so humbled in all his life. He walked up and down the room in a ferment, with that sense of the unbearable which is so bitter. Unbearable!—yet to be borne somehow; a something not to be ignored or cast off. It said much for Rose's concluding appeal that he heard it at all, and took in the meaning of it in his agitation and hot indignant rage; but he did hear it and it touched him. "If you say I am to marry you, I will do it." He stopped short in his impatient walk. Should he say it—in mingled despite and love—and keep her to her word? He came up to her and took her clasped hands within his, half in anger half in tenderness, and looked her in the face.

"If I say you are to marry me, you will do it? You pledge yourself to that? You will marry me, if I please?"

"Yes," said Rose, very pale, looking up at him steadfastly. She neither trembled nor hesitated. She had gone beyond any superficial emotion.

Then he stooped and kissed her with a passion which was rough—almost brutal. Rose's pale face flushed, and her slight figure wavered like a reed; but she neither shrank nor complained. He had a right to dictate to her—she had put it into his hands. The look of those large innocent eyes, from which all conflict had departed, which had grown abstract in their wistfulness, holding fast at least by one clear duty, went to his heart. He kept looking at her, but she did not quail. She had no thought but her word, and to do what she had said.

"Rose," he said, "you are a cheat, like all women. You come to me with this face, and insult me and stab me, and say then you will do what I tell you, and stand there, looking at me with innocent eyes like an angel. How could you find it in your heart—if you have a heart—to tell me all this? How dare you put that dainty little cruel foot of yours upon my neck, and scorn and torture me—how dare you, how dare you!" There came a glimmer into his eyes, as if it might have been some moisture forced up by means beyond his control, and he held her hands with such force that it seemed to Rose he shook her, whether willingly or not. But she did not shrink. She looked up at him, her eyes growing more and more wistful, and though he hurt her, did not complain.

"It was that you might know all the truth," she said, almost under her breath. "Now you know everything and can judge—and I will do as you say."

He held her so for a minute longer, which seemed eternity to Rose; then he let her hands drop and turned away.

"It is not you who are to blame," he said, "not you, but your mother, who would have sold you. Good God!—do all women traffic in their own flesh and blood?"

"Do not say so!" cried Rose, with sudden tears—"you shall not!

I will not hear it! She has been wrong; but that was not what she meant."

Mr. Incledon laughed—his mood seemed to have changed all in a moment. "Come," he said, "Rose. Perhaps it is not quite decorous for you, a young lady, to be here alone. Come! I will take you to your mother, and then you shall hear what I have got to say."

She walked out of the great house by his side as if she were in a dream. What did he mean? The suspense became terrible to her; for she could not guess what he would say. Her poor little feet twisted over each other and she stumbled and staggered with weakness as she went along beside him—stumbled so much that he made her take his arm, and led her carefully along, with now and then a kind but meaningless word. Before they entered the White House, Rose was leaning almost her whole weight upon his supporting arm. The world was swimming and floating around, the trees going in circles, now above, now below her, she thought. She was but half conscious when she went in, stumbling across the threshold, to the little hall, all bright with Mr. Incledon's flowers. Was she to be his, too, like one of them—a flower to carry about wherever he went, passive and helpless as one of the plants—past resistance, almost past suffering? "I am afraid she is ill; take care of her, Agatha," said Mr. Incledon to her sister, who came rushing open-mouthed and open-eyed; and, leaving her there, he strode unannounced into the drawing-room to meet the real author of his discomfiture, an antagonist more worthy of his steel and against whom he could use his weapons with less compunction than against the submissive Rose.

Mrs. Damerel had been occupied all the morning with Mr. Nolan, who had obeyed her summons on the first day of Rose's flight, but whom she had dismissed when she ascertained where her daughter was, assuring him that to do nothing was the best policy, as indeed it had proved to be. The Curate had gone home that evening obedient; but moved by the electrical impulse which seemed to have set all minds interested in Rose in motion on that special day, had come back this morning to urge her mother to go to her, or to allow him to go to her. Mr. Nolan's presence had furnished an excuse to Mrs. Damerel for declining to receive poor young Wodehouse, who had asked to see her immediately after breakfast. She was discussing even then with the Curate how to get rid of him, what to say to him, and what it was best to do to bring Rose back to her duty. "I can't see so clear as you that it's her duty, in all the circumstances," the Curate had said, doubtfully. "What have circumstances to do with a matter of right and wrong—of truth and honour?" cried Mrs. Damerel. "She must keep her word." It was at this precise moment of the conversation that Mr. Incledon appeared; and I suppose she must have seen something in his aspect and the expression of his face that showed some strange event had happened. Mrs. Damerel gave a low cry, and the muscles of Mr. Incledon's mouth were moved by one of those strange contortions which in such cases are supposed to do duty for a

smile. He bowed low, with a mock reverence to Mr. Nolan, but did not put out his hand.

"I presume," he said, "that this gentleman is in the secret of my humiliation, as well as the rest of the family, and that I need not hesitate to say what I have to say before him. It is pleasant to think that so large a circle of friends interest themselves in my affairs."

"What do you mean?" said Mrs. Damerel. "Your humiliation! Have you sustained any humiliation? I do not know what you mean."

"Oh! I can make it very clear," he said, with the same smile. "Your daughter has been with me; I have just brought her home."

"What! Rose?" said Mrs. Damerel, starting to her feet; but he stopped her before she could make a step.

"Do not go," he said; "it is more important that you should stay here. What have I done to you that you should have thus humbled me to the dust? Did I ask you to sell her to me? Did I want a wife for hire? Should I have authorized anyone to persecute an innocent girl, and drive her almost mad for me? Good heavens, for me! Think of it, if you can. Am I the sort of man to be forced on a girl—to be married as a matter of duty? How dared you—how dared anyone insult me so!"

Mrs. Damerel, who had risen to her feet, sank into a chair, and covered her face with her hands. I do not think she had ever once taken into consideration this side of the question.

"Mr. Incledon," she stammered, "you have been misinformed; you are mistaken. Indeed, indeed, it is not so."

"Misinformed!" he cried; "mistaken! I have my information from the very fountainhead—from the poor child who has been all but sacrificed to this supposed commercial transaction between you and me, which I disown altogether for my part. I never made such a bargain, nor thought of it. I never asked to buy your Rose. I might have won her, perhaps," he added, calming himself with an effort, "if you had let us alone, or I should have discovered at once that it was labour lost. Look here. We have been friends, and I never thought of you till to-day but with respect and kindness. How could you put such an affront on me?"

"Gently, gently," said Mr. Nolan, growing red; "you go too far, sir. If Mrs. Damerel has done wrong, it was a mistake of the judgment, not of the heart."

"The heart!" he cried, contemptuously; "how much heart was there in it? On poor Rose's side, a broken one; on mine, a heart deceived and deluded. Pah! do not speak to me of hearts or mistakes; I am too deeply mortified—too much wronged for that."

"Mr. Incledon," said Mrs. Damerel, rising, pale yet self-possessed, "I may have done wrong, as you say; but what I have done, I did for my child's advantage and for yours. You were told she did not love you, but you persevered; and I believed, and believe still, that when she knew you better—when she was your wife—she would love you. I may have

pressed her too far; but it was no more a commercial transaction—no more a sale of my daughter—" she said, with a burning flush coming over her face—" no more than I tell you. You do me as much wrong as you say I have done you——Rose! Rose!"

Rose came in, followed by Agatha, with her hat off, which showed more clearly the waste which emotion and fatigue, weary anxiety, waiting, abstinence, and mental suffering had worked upon her face. She had her hands clasped loosely yet firmly, in the attitude which had become habitual to her, and a pale smile like the wannest of winter sunshine on her face. She came up very quietly, and stood between the two, like a ghost, Agatha said, who stood trembling behind her.

"Mamma, do not be angry," she said, softly; "I have told him everything, and I am quite ready to do whatever he decides. In any case he ought to know everything, for it is he who is most concerned—he and me."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Captain Wodehouse did not get admission to the White House that day until the afternoon. He was not to be discouraged, though the messages he got were of a depressing nature enough. "Mrs. Damerel was engaged, and could not see him; would he come later?" "Mrs. Damerel was still engaged—more engaged than ever." And while Mary Jane held the door ajar, Edward heard a voice raised high, with an indignant tone, speaking continuously, which was the voice of Mr. Incledon, though he did not identify it. Later still, Mrs. Damerel was still engaged; but, as he turned despairing from the door, Agatha rushed out, with excited looks, and with a message that if he came back at three o'clock her mother would see him. "Rose has come home, and oh! there has been such a business!" Agatha whispered into his ear before she rushed back again. She knew a lover, and especially a favoured lover, by instinct, as some girls do; but Agatha had the advantage of always knowing her own mind, and never would be the centre of any imbroglio, like the unfortunate Rose.

"Are you going back to the White House again?" said Mrs. Wodehouse. "I wonder how you can be so servile, Edward. I would not go, hat in hand, to any girl, if I were you; and when you know that she is engaged to another man, and he a great deal better off than you are! How can you show so little spirit? There are more Roses in the garden than one, and sweeter Roses and richer, would be glad to have you. If I had thought you had so little proper pride, I should never have wished you to come here."

"I don't think I have any proper pride," said Edward, trying to make a feeble joke of it; "I have to come home now and then to know what it means."

"You were not always so poor-spirited," said his mother; "it is that

silly girl who has turned your head. And she is not even there; she has gone up to town to get her trousseau and choose her wedding silks, so they say; and you may be sure, if she is engaged like that, she does not want to be reminded of you."

"I suppose not," said Edward, drearily; "but as I promised to go back, I think I must. I ought at least to bid them good-bye."

"Oh! if that is all," said Mrs. Wodehouse, pacified, "go, my dear; and mind you put the very best face upon it. Don't look as if it were anything to you; congratulate them, and say you are glad to hear that anyone so nice as Mr. Incledon is to be the gentleman. Oh! if I were in your place, I should know what to say! I should give Miss Rose something to remember. I should tell her I hoped she would be happy in her grand house, and was glad to hear that the settlements were everything they ought to be. She would feel that, you may be sure; for a girl that sets up for romance and poetry and all that don't like to be supposed mercenary. She should not soon forget her parting with me."

"Do you think I wish to hurt and wound her?" said Edward. "Surely no. If she is happy, I will wish her more happiness. She has never harmed me—no, mother. It cannot do a man any harm, even if it makes him unhappy, to think of a woman as I think of Rose."

"Oh! you have no spirit," cried Mrs. Wodehouse; "I don't know how a son of mine can take it so easily. Rose, indeed! Her very name makes my blood boil!"

But Edward's blood was very far from boiling as he walked across the Green for the third time that day. The current of life ran cold and low in him. The fiery determination of the morning to "have it out" with Mrs. Damerel, and know his fate and Rose's fate, had fallen into a despairing resolution at least to see her for the last time, to bid her forget everything that had passed, and try himself to forget. If her fate was sealed, and no longer in her own power to alter, that was all a generous man could do; and he felt sure, from the voices he had heard, and from the air of agitation about the house, and from Agatha's hasty communication, that this day had been a crisis to more than himself. He met Mr. Incledon as he approached the house. His rival looked at him gravely without a smile, and passed him with an abrupt "good morning." Mr. Incledon had not the air of a triumphant lover, and there was something of impatience and partial offence in his look as his eyes lingered for a moment upon the young sailor; so it appeared to Edward, though I think it was rather regret, and a certain wistful envy that was in Mr. Incledon's eyes. This young fellow, not half so clever, or so cultivated, or so important as himself, had won the prize which he had tried for and failed. The baffled man was still disturbed by unusual emotion, but he was not ungenerous in his sentiments; but then the other believed that he himself was the failure, and that Mr. Incledon had succeeded, and interpreted his looks, as we all do, according to the commentary in our own minds. Edward went on more depressed than ever after this meeting. Just outside

the White House he encountered Mr. Nolan, going out to walk with the children. "Now that the gale is over, the little boats are going out for a row," said the Curate, looking at him with a smile. It was not like Mr. Nolan's usual good nature, poor Edward thought. He was ushered in at once to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Damerel sat in a great chair, leaning back, with a look of weakness and exhaustion quite out of keeping with her usual energy. She held out her hand to him without rising. Her eyes were red, as if she had been shedding tears, and there was a flush upon her face. Altogether, her appearance bewildered him; no one in the world had ever seen Mrs. Damerel looking like this before.

"I am afraid you will think me importunate, coming back so often," he said, "but I felt that I must see you. Not that I come with much hope; but still it is better to know the very worst, if there is no good to hear."

"It depends on what you think worst or best," she said. "Mr. Wodehouse, you told me you were promoted—you are captain now, and you have a ship?"

"Commander: and alas! under orders for China, with ten days' more leave," he said, with a faint smile; "though perhaps, on the whole, that may be best. Mrs. Damerel, may I not ask—for Rose? Pardon me for calling her so—I can't think of her otherwise. If it is all settled and made up, and my poor chance over, may I not see her, only for a few minutes? If you think what a dismal little story mine has been—sent away without seeing her a year ago, then raised into sudden hope by our chance meeting the other morning, and now, I suppose, sentenced to banishment for ever——"

"Stay a little," she said; "I have had a very exciting day, and I am much worn out. Must you go in ten days?"

"Alas!" said Wodehouse, "and even my poor fortnight got with such difficulty—though perhaps on the whole it is better, Mrs. Damerel."

"Yes," she said, "have patience a moment; things have turned out very differently from what I wished. I cannot pretend to be pleased, scarcely resigned, to what you have all done between you. You have nothing to offer my daughter, nothing! and she has nothing to contribute on her side. It is all selfish inclination, what you liked, not what was best, that has swayed you. You had not self-denial enough to keep silent; she had not self-denial enough to consider that this is not a thing for a day but for life; and the consequences, I suppose, as usual, will fall upon me. All my life I have had nothing to do but toil to make up for the misfortunes caused by self-indulgence. Others have had their will and pleasure, and I have paid the penalty. I thought for once it might have been different, but I have been mistaken, as you see."

"You forget that I have no clue to your meaning—that you are speaking riddles," said Wodehouse, whose depressed heart had begun to rise and flutter and thump against his young breast.

"Ah; that is true," said Mrs. Damerel, rising with a sigh. "Well,

I wash my hands of it; and for the rest you will prefer to hear it from Rose rather than from me."

He stood in the middle of the room speechless when she closed the door behind her, and heard her soft steps going in regular measure through the still house, as Rose had heard them once. How still it was! the leaves fluttering at the open window, the birds singing, Mrs. Damerel's footsteps sounding fainter, his heart beating louder. But he had not very long to wait.

Mr. Nolan and the children went out on the river, and rowed up that long lovely reach past Alfredsbury, skirting the bank, which was pink with branches of the wild rose and sweet with the feathery flowers of the Queen of the Meadows. Dick flattered himself that he pulled an excellent bow, and the Curate, who loved the children's chatter, and themselves, humoured the boy to the top of his bent. Agatha steered, and felt it an important duty, and Patty, who had nothing else to do, leaned her weight over the side of the boat, and did her best to capsize it, clutching at the wild roses and the meadow-queen. They shipped their oars and floated down with the stream when they had gone as far as they cared to go, and went up the hill again to the White House in a perfect bower of wild flowers, though the delicate rose blossoms began to droop in the warm grasp of the children before they got home. When they rushed in, flooding the house all through and through with their voices and their joyous breath and their flowers, they found all the rooms empty, the drawing-room silent, in a green repose, and not a creature visible. But while Agatha rushed upstairs, calling upon her mother and Rose, Mr. Nolan saw a sight from the window which set his mind at rest. Two young figures together, one leaning on the other—two heads bent close, talking too low for any hearing but their own. The Curate looked at them with a smile and a sigh. They had attained the height of blessedness. What better could the world give them? and yet the good Curate's sigh was not all for the disappointed, nor his smile for their happiness alone.

The lovers were happy; but there are drawbacks to every mortal felicity. The fact that Edward had but nine days left, and that their fate must after that be left in obscurity was, as may be supposed, a very serious drawback to their happiness. But their good fortune did not forsake them; or rather, to speak more truly, the disappointed lover did not forsake the girl who had appealed to him, who had mortified and tortured him, and promised with all the unconscious cruelty of candour to marry him if he told her to do so. Mr. Incledon went straight to town from the White House, intent on finishing the work he had begun. He had imposed on Mrs. Damerel as a duty to him, as a recompense for all that he had suffered at her hands, the task of receiving Wodehouse, and sanctioning the love which her daughter had given; and he went up to town to the Admiralty, to his friend whose unfortunate leniency had permitted the young sailor to return home. Mr. Incledon treated the matter lightly,

making a joke of it. "I told you he was not to come home, but to be sent off as far as possible," he said.

"Why, what harm could the poor young fellow do in a fortnight?" said my Lord. "I find I knew his father—a fine fellow and a good officer. The son shall be kept in mind, both for his sake and yours."

"He has done all the harm that was apprehended in his fortnight," said Mr. Incledon, "and now you must give him an extension of leave—enough to be married in. There's nothing else for it. You ought to do your best for him, for it is your fault."

Upon which my Lord, who was of a genial nature, laughed and inquired into the story, which Mr. Incledon related to him after a fashion in a way which amused him hugely. The consequence was that Commander Wodehouse got his leave extended to three months, and was transferred from the China station to the Mediterranean. Mr. Incledon never told them who was the author of this benefit, though I think they had little difficulty in guessing. He sent Rose a *parure* of pearls and turquoises, simple enough for her youth, and the position she had preferred to his, and sent the diamonds which had been reset for her back to his bankers; and then he went abroad. He did not go back to Whitton, even for necessary arrangements, but sent for all he wanted; and after that morning's work in the White House, returned to Dinglefield no more for years.

After this there was no possible reason for delay, and Rose was married to her sailor in the parish church by good Mr. Nolan, and instead of any other wedding tour went off to cruise with him in the Mediterranean. She had regained her bloom, and merited her old name again before the day of the simple wedding. Happiness brought back colour and fragrance to the Rose in June; but traces of the storm that had almost crushed her never altogether disappeared, from her heart at least, if they did from her face. She cried over Mr. Incledon's letter the day before she became Edward Wodehouse's wife. She kissed the turquoises when she fastened them about her pretty neck. Love is the best, no doubt; but it would be hard if to other sentiments less intense even a bride might not spare a tear.

As for the mothers on either side, they were both indifferently satisfied. Mrs. Wodehouse would not unbend so much for months after as to say anything but "Good morning" to Mrs. Damerel, who had done her best to make her boy unhappy; and as for the marriage, now that it was accomplished after so much fuss and bother, it was after all nothing of a match for Edward. Mrs. Damerel, on her side, was a great deal too proud to offer any explanations except such as were absolutely necessary to those few influential friends who must be taken into every one's confidence who desires to keep a place in society. She told those confidants frankly enough that Edward and Rose had met accidentally, and that a youthful love, supposed to be over long ago, had burst forth again so warmly, that nothing could be done but to tell Mr. Incledon; and that he had behaved like a hero. The Green for a little while was very angry at Rose; the

ladies shook their heads at her, and said how very, very hard it was on poor Mr. Incledon. But Mr. Incledon was gone, and Whitton shut up, while Rose still remained with all the excitement of a pretty wedding in prospect, and "a perfect romance" in the shape of a love-story. Gradually, therefore, the girl was forgiven; the richer neighbours went up to town and bought their presents, the poorer ones looked over their stores to see what they could give, and the girls made pieces of lace for her, and pin-cushions, and anti-macassars; and thus her offence was condoned by all the world. Though Mrs. Damerel asked but a few people to the breakfast, the church was crowded to see the wedding, and all the gardens in the parish cut their best roses for its decoration; for this event occurred in July, the end of the rose season. Dinglefield Church overflowed with roses, and the bridesmaids' dresses were trimmed with them, and every man in the place had some sort of a rosebud in his coat. And thus it was half smothered in roses that the young people went away.

Mr. Incledon was not heard of for years after; but quite lately he came back to Whitton married to a beautiful Italian lady, for whose sake it was, originally, as Rumour whispered, that he had remained unmarried so long. This lady had married and forsaken him nearly twenty years before, and had become a widow about the time that he left England. I hope, therefore, that though Rose's sweet youth and freshness had attracted him to her, and though he had regarded her with deep tenderness, hoping perhaps for a new, subdued, yet happy life through her means, there had been little passion in him to make his wound bitter after the mortification of the moment. The Contessa was a woman of his own age, who had been beautiful, and was magnificent, a regal kind of creature, at home amid all the luxuries which his wealth provided, and filling a very different position from anything that could have been attainable by Rose. They dazzle the people on the Green when they are at Whitton, and the Contessa is as gracious and more inaccessible than any queen. She smiles at them all benignly, and thinks them an odd sort of gentle savages, talking over their heads in a voice which is louder and rounder than suits with English notions. And it is reported generally that Mr. Incledon and his foreign wife are "not happy." I cannot say anything about this one way or another, but I am sure that the happiness he shares with the Contessa must be something of a very different character from that which he would have had with Rose; higher, perhaps, as mere love (you all say) is the highest; but different—and in some things, perhaps, scarcely so homely-sweet.

When Rose heard of this, which she did in the harbour of an Italian port, she was moved by interest so true and lively that her husband was almost jealous. She read her mother's letter over and over, and could not be done talking of it. Captain Wodehouse after a while had to go on shore, and his wife sat on the deck while the blue waves grew bluer and bluer with evening under the great ship, and the Italian sky lost its bloom of sunset, and the stars came out in the magical heavens. What a lovely

scene it was, the lights in the houses twinkling and rising tier on tier, the little lamps quivering at the mastheads, the stars in the sky. Rose shut her soft eyes, which were wet—was it with dew? and saw before her not the superb Genoa and the charmed Italian night, but the little Green with its sunburnt grass and the houses standing round, in each one of which friendly eyes were shining. She saw the green old drawing-room of the White House, and the look he cast upon her as he turned and went away. That was the day when the great happiness of her life came upon her; and yet she had lost something, she could not tell what, when Mr. Incledon went away. And now he was married, and to his old love, some one who had gone before herself in his heart, and came after her, and was its true owner. Rose shed a few tears quite silently in the soft night, which did not betray her. Her heart contracted for a moment with a strange pang—was she jealous of this unknown woman? "God bless him!" she said to herself, with a little outburst of emotion. Did not she owe him all she had in the world? good right had Rose to bid "God bless him!" but yet there was an undisclosed shade of feeling which was not joy in his happiness, lingering in her heart.

"Do you think we could find out who this Contessa is?" she said to her husband, when he returned. "I hope she is a good woman, and will make him happy."

"Yes," said Captain Wodehouse, "he is a good fellow, and deserves to be happy; and now you can be comfortable, my dear, for you see he has consoled himself," he added, with a laugh.

Robert Southey's Second Wife.

Caroline Bowles, who, somewhat late in life, became the second wife of Robert Southey, the Poet Laureate, belonged to the same family as Canon Lisle Bowles; from whose works he was wont to say he "had derived even more benefit than from Cowper's." Her mother was sister to General Sir Harry Burrard, who was made a baronet for his services, and died in command of the First Grenadier Guards, at Calshot Castle; of which old fortress on the Solent he was governor.

On an arm of the sea, not very far from Calshot, and opposite the Needles, stands the ancient borough-town of Lymington, which sent two members to Parliament under the patronage of the Burrards of Walhampton, until the passing of the Reform Bill. At that eventful time the senior member was Admiral Sir Harry Burrard-Neale, Bart., K.G.C., who had long been Naval Aide-de-Camp and a Groom of the Bedchamber to George the Third; and it is noteworthy that he was at once re-elected as the Conservative member, by the free electors of Lymington.

A beautiful obelisk which overlooks the town from the opposite side of the river, backed by the Walhampton woods, marks the esteem in which he was held by them, in the navy, and in Parliament, by the royal family, and by all who ever knew him.

A century ago Lymington retained a peculiarly quaint and picturesque character; travellers then rode well armed through the dangerous tracts of the New Forest on their way towards London, and prayers were duly offered in church for their safe arrival there.

The town carried on a good coasting-trade as far as Cornwall, and was famous both for its salterns, and its timber-yards and shipwrights. The principal street ran from the quays on the river, straight up a long hill (as it still does), and was composed of a singular variety of houses and shops, of all heights and sizes. Near St. Thomas' Church many large pleasant old dwellings, with shady walled gardens, and ivied gables, and court-yards, may still be seen. From this upper end of Lymington the road to the right leads to Buckland Rings, a well-defined Roman encampment on the verge of the Forest, and overgrown with trees. At its foot stood an old-fashioned small house, with great elms partly overshadowing its trim garden and mossy lawns, called Buckland Cottage. There, in 1787, Caroline Bowles was born, a first and only child.

Two years afterwards, on the 27th of June, 1789, George the Third, accompanied by the Queen and three elder Princesses, honoured Sir Harry and Lady Neale with a visit; and were received at the Town-hall (then standing in the middle of the High Street) by the Mayor and Cor-

poration, who, being introduced by Lord Delawarr, had the honour of kissing their Majesties' hands. At that moment the King's attention was drawn to a gaunt figure draped in a red gown ornamented with yellow braid, who held what looked like a gilt club, and gazed at him with the profoundest veneration from the further end of the hall.

"What is that singular-looking personage?" asked the King of Lord Delawarr.

"Our mace-bearer, your Majesty, Jedidiah Pike," was the whispered answer.

But the name caught its owner's ear, and supposing that he had been summoned, he advanced hastily. Overcome, however, by his feelings, and seeing the royal eyes fixed upon him, honest Jedidiah prostrated himself, mace and all, at the foot of the "haut-pas," looking up from the ground with an expression of such passionate loyalty that the King not only burst out laughing, but also told him to get up and kiss his hand, which he was sure so good a subject deserved to do. Long afterwards he spoke of "old Pike," with the same hearty laughter.

This incident illustrates the general feeling of Lymington in those days, when "a Divinity," did indeed, "hedge a king."

Nowhere was loyalty more truly a religion than at Buckland Cottage. The little daughter of the house was educated entirely at home. Her father, who had been in the army, was remarkably silent, and devoted to the quiet art of angling. This taste was easily gratified in a forest-country abounding in shadowy pools fringed with water-weed, and in rivulets that drained the valleys, and often sparkled in the sunshine. Of these, Royden Stream was the most beautiful; and there he often took her as soon as she was able to trot by his side with her basket. He invariably carried a well-worn copy of Isaac Walton in his pocket, which she read with delight when a mere baby in years. Whether from Kit Marlowe or holy Master Herbert she caught the knack of rhyming, or from the great store of ballads sung by her mother, she began making stories in verse even before she could write. When she had mastered that accomplishment, which she did also very early, she would let no one but her father catch a glimpse of her verses. She never had a very good ear for music, but if she heard poetry repeated, its rhythm haunted her sleeping and waking till she had composed something in the same measure. Mrs. Bowles, alarmed by this precocity, endeavoured to keep books of poetry out of her reach. The most anxious parent could hardly however have feared over-excitement from Gesner's "Death of Abel," and that accordingly she was allowed to read; but it filled her mind with images of pastoral purity and devotion, which all seemed connected with an altar and sacrifices.

And God must still,
So with myself I argued, surely love
Such pure sweet offerings. There can be no harm
In laying them, as Eve was wont each day,
On such an altar: what if I could make

Something resembling that! To work I went
With the strong purpose which is strength and power,
And in a certain unfrequented nook
Of our long rambling garden, fenced about
By thorns and bushes, thick with summer leaves,
And threaded by a little water course
(No substitute contemptible I thought
For Eve's meandering rills), uprose full soon
A mound of mossy turf, that when complete
I called an altar: and with simple faith,
Aye, and with feelings of adoring love
Hallowing the childish error, laid thereon
Daily my floral tribute, yet from prayer,
Wherewith I longed to consecrate the act,
Refraining with an undefined fear
(Instinctive) of offence: and there was doubt
Of perfect blamelessness (unconscious doubt)
In the suspicious unrelaxing care
With which I kept my secret.—*The Birthday* (1836).

Caroline Bowles was an exceedingly pretty child, and old relations of hers and of the writer's, often spoke of her fairy-like appearance when found reading or writing in the hollow trunk of some old tree, or in a mimic cave, with one flat stone for a floor, overhung with ferns and ivy, by the side of Royden Stream.

She spoke French as soon as she did English, for her grandmother, Mrs. George Burrard, or, as she was usually called, Madame Burrard, was a Jersey lady, and always spoke her native language in her own family. She was connected with all the old Norman families of the island, where feudal customs and the manners of *la vieille cour* long survived their disappearance in France. Her husband was brother to Sir Harry Burrard, warden of the New Forest, and governor of Calshot Castle, who became the first baronet of Walhampton. He had early been betrothed to a handsome and wealthy Jersey heiress by a family compact, and the marriage was to take place when his regiment returned from Flanders. They had seen little of each other, but they parted with the promise of keeping up as constant a correspondence as the uncertain posts of those days allowed. Great was the young soldier's happiness when, as time passed on, each letter from Mademoiselle D—— became more delightful than the last. She had appeared to him rather cold and imperious, and he fancied she had accepted his addresses too much as a matter of course; but her letters undeceived him, and left him no doubt of her affection. They contained the fullest accounts of her daily life at the old chateau, with all the little adventures that befel herself and her friends, described in the most amusing way, and with a child-like zest and womanly grace, that promised delightful companionship in the future.

At last he obtained a short leave of absence, and hurried to Jersey, to assure her better than he could do in writing of the warm affection that had succeeded on his own part to the somewhat chilly ceremonial of

their former intercourse. Mademoiselle D—— had often alluded to a summer-house at the end of the nut-tree avenue, leading from the garden to the neighbouring woods, as her favourite spot for writing. On hearing, therefore, when he arrived unexpectedly at the chateau, that the Seigneur and Madame were paying visits, but that she and her cousin Mademoiselle Madeleine were in the summer-house, he lost not a moment in seeking her there. Full of hope and joy he stood for a moment on that glowing afternoon near the pretty pavilion, afraid of startling his promised bride by so sudden an appearance. The summer-leaves were thick, and the noisette-roses clustered round it, but he heard a well-known voice exclaim: "Will you never have done, Madeleine, with that tiresome letter? Thank goodness, it is one of the last we need send, for he seems likely to be here before long! It is lucky we write alike, I should hardly have patience to copy all you find to say——"

Perhaps George Burrard took another turn in the nut-tree walk before he presented himself; but when he entered the summer-house he saw his betrothed tying knots of various coloured ribbons that lay on the rustic table, and her young cousin writing, with a shower of golden curls falling over her face, as she held her desk on her lap. There was something in that blushing face which told the story of the letters, no less clearly than Mademoiselle's exclamation, and it fixed his fate and hers.

When at last all obstacles had been overcome, and "la petite Madeleine" was his wife instead of the proud heiress, she brought with her to Lymington a maid, who lived with her and her descendants till extreme old age. She was always called "Ma Bonne," and treated as a friend. She continued, like her mistress, the dress of her youth, and wore her high cap, and long gold earrings, and short jackets, to the last. Madame Burrard, as she also grew old, used to be carried from the porch at Buckland Cottage in a sedan chair to her pew in church. There, I am afraid, she bowed and curtsied to her friends before the service began; but I am quite sure that she stood up in her little high-heeled shoes of black velvet with silver buckles, and that a diamond crescent sparkled just in front of her powdered hair, which was drawn up on a cushion under a lace cap and hood. The rest of her dress was invariably black; but she also wore the lace ruffles, neckerchief, and apron, that had been in fashion when she was exactly like what her little granddaughter afterwards became. She had a delightful manner of telling stories, as well as of writing; and it was always said that Caroline inherited her peculiar vein of conversation. She had the same beautiful hair, dark grey eyes, and finely-formed forehead, with a slight graceful figure, and a hand as deft and light as ever held needle, pen, or pencil, though she never had patience to learn to spin. This was an art in which her charming grandmother excelled, and she always kept with affectionate care the pretty wheel from which Madame Burrard used to draw the finest lace-thread of any lady in Hampshire.

The Rev. William Gilpin was vicar of Boldre (the parish to which

Lymington belongs) during Caroline's childhood. He is still remembered as the author of a work on forest scenery, to the beauties of which he first drew attention, and being an excellent artist, his illustrations were as much admired as his writing. He was very fond of the intelligent little girl, and she always said Mr. Gilpin had first put a pencil into her hand. Her portrait of him in his library, while she stood by to watch him draw, is one of her best pieces of descriptive poetry. Here are a few lines of it—

> How holy was the calm of that small room!
> How tenderly the evening light stole in
> As 'twere in reverence of its sanctity!
> Here and there touching with a golden gleam
> Book-shelf or picture-frame, or brightening up
> The nosegay, set with daily care (love's own)
> Upon the study table. Dallying there
> Among the books and papers, and with beam
> Of softest radiance, starring like a glory
> The old man's high bald head and noble brow—
> There still I found him, busy with his pen
> (Oh, pen of varied power! found faithful ever!
> Faithful and fearless in the one great cause!)—
> Or some grave tome, or lighter work of taste
> (His no ascetic, harsh, soul-narrowing creed).
> Or that unrivalled pencil, with few strokes,
> And sober tinting slight, that wrought effects
> Most magical; the poetry of art!—*The Birthday.*

Lymington had long been a depôt for English troops, owing to its neighbourhood to Portsmouth and the passage by the Needles to the Channel. During the French Revolution and the subsequent war with France, a large body of Royalists were encamped near the town; the group of trees was long pointed out under which were the tents of those gallant leaders who fell with their little army at Quiberon. A large depôt of foreign troops was afterwards established; and the town and neighbourhood were also full of naval and military officers, who were either stationed there or invalided. Society, therefore, was remarkably varied and animated; German, Dutch, French, and Italian officers, as well as the families of the emigrant noblesse, took their part in it; and the writer has often heard the Lymington balls of those days described as the gayest that ever were known, not excepting those of Bath itself. On one occasion Caroline Bowles, who was usually very fond of dancing, let her mother go to a ball without her. She amused herself with making a sketch of the principal groups certain to be seen at it; and though slightly caricatured, they were so like, that people thought, when Mrs. Bowles showed it to her friends, that it must have been taken on the spot. No one could imagine where the artist could have been hidden! This drawing, with some alterations, was afterwards lithographed, with another equally clever. They both had considerable success under the titles of "A Country Ball," and "Packing Up after the Ball."

During these youthful days Caroline paid a visit to some relations in

Jersey, and reproduced her hosts long afterwards as the gentle clergyman, Mr. Seale, and his sweet old maiden sister, Mrs. Helen, in her "Chapters on Churchyards."

At that time she had no idea of writing for publication. On the contrary, the prejudice against female authorship was so strong in the circle to which she belonged that she would have shrunk from incurring it.

It may readily be imagined that with so many pleasant accomplishments, and a tolerably good fortune, Miss Bowles had many admirers. She did indeed return the long attachment of one in every respect worthy of her; but it was at last decided by the family-conclave that her engagement should be broken off, owing to want of sufficient means on the gentleman's part. She submitted her own judgment to that of her relations, but she formed no other engagement till she accepted Robert Southey. From that time she turned to literature as her "chief resource from wearying thoughts."

Her first long poem was a novel in verse, called "Ellen Fitzarthur." Southey was then at the height of his fame, and after long hesitation she ventured to send the manuscript to him, determining to abide by his opinion as to whether it should go into a publisher's hands or not. He read it with great interest, and wrote judiciously and kindly to his unknown correspondent, whom he warmly encouraged. The poem, followed by several shorter pieces, was accordingly published; and the latter especially were very much admired. In those happy days authoresses were very few, and she at once received, through her bookseller, letters of praise from many distinguished writers. After her mother's death, in 1817, part of her fortune was lost in the failure of an Indian bank; and as she now lived alone, with her faithful "bonne" and two other attached servants, at Buckland Cottage, she found the reward of her labours very useful. But she never thoroughly settled down into what could be called a literary life. She kept up an animated correspondence with Southey, who from the first felt the charm of her sympathy, and wrote frequently and fully about his own works, with abundant criticisms on those of others. Letter-writing was naturally to them both a more perfect means of pouring out their minds than conversation; and it was some years before they met. No one, however, better deserved the once coveted name of "une charmante raconteuse" than Miss Bowles. She had a quaint caustic style of telling an anecdote that was entirely her own; and in ghost stories she was inimitable.

Besides being agreeable herself, she had the rare talent of making every one she wished to please feel agreeable too; and rather surprised her visitors now and then, not with her own talents, but with those they appeared to be gifted with in her society. It is still only fair to add, that her strong sense of the ridiculous, and her utter absence of sentimentality, disappointed comparative strangers, who expected something pathetic from the writer of so many touching poems. Things common enough in themselves, however, when they had passed through the crucible of her mind,

were found to have unlooked-for ore adhering to them. No one more readily caught a friend's idea; but it was quite a chance whether she would hold it up in a comical light, or with a variety of new shades added to it that came from her own fancy; or how, indeed, if it happened to have struck her imagination at all, she would finally dispose of it!

Everywhere, of course, she was a welcome guest; and there were many delightful houses amongst the "walks" of the New Forest at which she occasionally stayed. Calshot Castle (of which two Sir Harry Burrards had successively been governors) continued after the death of her uncle to be the home of his widow and family. No one who sees it from the Solent, standing round and grim on a long neck of rocky beach which runs out to sea, would think of it as a pleasant ladies' abode. But such it was. The deep embrasures of the windows in the ordinary sitting-room, each formed a recess for drawing or writing, or some artistic fancy-work; the walls were covered with books, carvings, and pictures painted by various members of that accomplished family; and the heavy buttresses were made to afford shelter to flowers, and abundance of climbing plants.

The woods that surrounded "Luttrell's Folly" were not far off; and the cottages of the Forest, half-hidden by moss and house-leek, formed endless subjects for the pencil; as well as the ever-shifting lights and shadows on the shores of the Isle of Wight. The old fortress was as much a home to Caroline Bowles as Buckland. Comparatively early in her long acquaintance with Southey, she was gratified by his mention of Paul Burrard, who was Aide-de-Camp to Sir John Moore at Coruña, and fell, mortally wounded, just after his chief had been struck, when scarcely nineteen.

These are some of Southey's lines:—

Not unprepared
The heroic youth was found, for in the ways
Of piety had he been trained; and what
The dutiful child upon his mother's knees
Had learned, the soldier faithfully observed.
In chamber or in tent, the Book of God
Was his beloved manual; and his life
Beseem'd the lessons which from thence he drew.
For gallant as he was, and blithe of heart,
Expert of hand, and keen of eye, and prompt
In intellect, religion was the crown
Of all his noble properties.

* * * * * * *

Upon the spot from whence he just had seen
His General borne away, the appointed ball
Reach'd him. But not on that Gallician ground
Was it his fate, like many a British heart,
To mingle with the soil: the sea received
His mortal relics—to a watery grave
Consign'd, so near his native shore, so near
His father's house, that they who loved him best,
Unconscious of its import, heard the gun
Which fired his knell.

It was about the time this poem was written that Miss Bowles paid her first visit to Keswick, where Mr. and Mrs. Southey were surrounded with their large household. Her host was chained so resolutely to his desk among the books of his library, that he was only able to give up one day to the enjoyment of showing her the scenery of his beloved hills.

On that exquisite summer's day, a party had been got up by the young people, who had themselves prepared the meal that was spread somewhere near the Falls of Lodore. Sara Coleridge, who was then in the bloom of her ethereal beauty, had made a basketful of remarkably nice cakes; and Caroline Bowles kept a record of the charming figure offering them to her friends, in a sketch, which was in due time lithographed. It contains likenesses of all who were assembled on that occasion, and is named "A Picnic among the Hills."

She had met Southey first in London (as far as I recollect) at her publishers', the Messrs. Blackwood; but she now saw him in the midst of his family, who were attached to him by the strongest ties of affection and gratitude. For them he worked so hard that he denied himself the rest and change of scene that might have prolonged his life, and perhaps made his enormous learning and industry more productive of books that paid. No one enjoyed a holiday more thoroughly, and it may be well imagined that with so agreeable a guest he put forth his pleasantest powers.

There was no lack of conversation at Greta Hall of an evening; but excepting for a short hour's walk, which he took as a duty every day, he remained as usual shut up with his writing, appointing his friend Wordsworth to show her the country. Mr. Wordsworth, she said, used to walk for miles by the side of her pony, pointing out every fold of the hills, with their glens and tarns. Scarcely a shadow from the passing clouds swept across lake or upland pasture without his remarking it. He was fond of repeating his own poetry in illustration of the scenery, and did so with a strong north-country accent, and very sonorous voice, pronouncing the *I* in such words as "walk" and "talk," in a peculiar manner.

When Miss Bowles left Keswick, she carried away a characteristic present from Southey—an extract he had made while in Portugal from an old wooden-bound book, which he found in a convent library. It had apparently never been opened, since the monks had chained it so near the ceiling that he had to stand on a high ladder to read it, and to write out the legend, for it was covered with thick cobwebs.

She also took back to Buckland Cottage a drawing she had made of the interior of that pleasant room in which the family collected of an evening with their frequent guests, but which overflowed with the books of the master of the house. These were dear to him as the dearest friends, and he loved an old volume with creamy paper, and broad black printing, finely bound in vellum or Russia-leather, right well, almost to the last.

The view of his library, with the open box of books just arrived by coach from London, in the foreground, soon took its place in Miss Bowles' pretty drawing-room; and the extract from the monkish volume, made its appearance in "The Legend of Santarem;" which she published a good while afterwards. Southey used to say that "she only required concentration of thought and energies to produce a great work." This she never attempted, nor was it at all within the scope of her powers. She contented herself with sending beautiful and popular sketches to *Blackwood's Magazine*, which were chiefly taken from domestic incidents belonging to her own family histories. The pathetic story of Andrew Cleaves, which is probably her best, belonged purely to fiction; but is worked up with wonderfully graphic details. It was written while she was watching the dying bed of "Ma Bonne," who lived to unusual old age, and sank to rest in the arms of her nurse-child, by whom she was so fondly cherished. She is mentioned in several poems as the last of that household which had surrounded her youth.

The good Quaker, Bernard Barton, used often to persuade Miss Bowles to write for his Annual. Alaric Watts also claimed frequent contributions from her pen; and her works became especially popular in America, where Washington Irving had revived the love of all things pertaining to old-fashioned English life. She was very often amused by letters from her American admirers, who implored her to cross the Atlantic and to gladden their country with her presence. Than such a prospect, as may well be supposed, nothing could have been farther from her wishes! Her health had always been delicate, and did not improve as she advanced in life—on the contrary, she was subject to severe suffering from neuralgic and other causes, which made her frequently unable to see her most intimate friends. It was a very great pleasure to her, therefore, to alter and improve her little domain, which she did with the proceeds of "The Widow's Tale," and other works. She found an unfailing source of interest in her conservatory; and the rustic dairy, richly furnished with old China, which she had built under a great elm tree on her lawn; and also in her little pony carriage, in which she constantly visited her poor people on the outskirts of the New Forest, followed by her great black mastiff.

One of her greatest friends for many years was an accomplished Swiss lady, whose husband was descended from Lord Chesterfield's "Dayrolles," and who as a widow had happily settled near Lymington.

When well enough to enjoy the parties often given by Lady Neale at Walhampton, no one was more cheerful than Miss Bowles, or contributed more to the amusement of guests staying at that hospitable house. On one occasion, when she happened to meet a large party assembled there for Christmas festivities, she, like every one else, appeared thoroughly mystified by a bundle of torn letters which the hostess had picked up in the corridor, and which had apparently met with some accident on their way to the post-office. Everybody was requested to claim from among them, his or her property, the signatures being unluckily missing. They

contained strictures, more or less true, on everyone's manners, aspirations, and general character; and so well was the deception kept up that it was not traced to its proper source for some time.

About the year 1831, Edward Irving, then still a popular preacher, and undoubtedly a man of noble intellectual powers, came for a short summer-holiday with his wife, to Mrs. Baring-Wall's house at Lymington. He preached (as is common with Scotch ministers) at the Independent Chapel, and its narrow walls could not contain the eager crowds who flocked to hear him. He therefore agreed to the generally expressed wish, and it was given out that he would preach once on Milford Common, near the old encampment of the French Royalists.

A golden afternoon glowing on the harvest-fields and hedgerows by which it is surrounded, and on the Solent dotted with white sails, brought out all the carriages of the neighbourhood. Most people declared they were driving that way by chance: but so it was, that they all stopped to hear, and it certainly was an hour worth stopping for.

The great preacher was then in the prime of life and of energy, with a magnificent figure, which could well bear to stand with the westering sun for a background; and a great crowd gathered in front of him, watching every change of his countenance, and catching to its farthest outskirts every intonation of his wonderfully flexible voice. He preached on the great harvest to be gathered in by all who were ready to serve the Lord of the harvest. His imagery was taken from the surrounding scenery and the associations of the place, and the effect was electrical. No one who heard that sermon ever thought very hardly in after-days of Irving himself, however much they may have dissented from his peculiar views and conduct.

Miss Bowles was of course there in her pretty pony carriage; and on the following morning she met him (with the writer) at Mrs. Wall's house.

They had a long conversation, in the course of which Mr. Irving spoke warmly of the obligations he owed to Coleridge at the beginning of his career in London. He loved, he said, "to watch for Coleridge's grand ideas looming through the mist."

Caroline Bowles afterwards remarked that he reminded her, as a preacher, of Robert Hall, whose eloquence till then she had thought unsurpassed; and in personal appearance of Mr. Southey. She was convinced that if the latter could have held ten minutes' conversation with Edward Irving, against whom he had written with extreme bitterness, "they would have stalked together away towards Brockenhurst, the best friends in the world." But Southey never had such an opportunity, and Miss Bowles never saw Irving again.

In the course of the same summer she had the pleasure of a second visit from Southey; but the chief part of his time was occupied in writing for the *Quarterly Review*.

In a letter to Mrs. Hodson he says: "The remainder of the paper

was written at Caroline Bowles', where I shut myself up for eleven days, refusing all invitations, seeing no visitors, and never going out, excepting when she mounted her Shetland pony and I walked by her side for an hour or two before dinner." So far, indeed, did he carry this *sauvageris*, that on one occasion, when an old and dear relative of his hostess persuaded her to open the door of the room in which Southey was writing, she was so much struck by his air of annoyance that she directly closed it. As they met again, her guest exclaimed, "When you had shown my mane and my tail, you might as well have let me roar!"

In 1834 his great sorrow came upon him in the illness of his wife, which ended in mental alienation.

"Forty years," he writes, "has she been the life of my life, and I have left her this day in a lunatic asylum. God who has visited me with this affliction, has given me strength to bear it, and will, I know, support me to the end, whatever that may be."

His letters at this period all breathe the same spirit of resignation and of steadfast endurance, but his health was greatly impaired by three years of devoted watchfulness, accompanied by the necessity for literary labour.

On the 16th of November, 1837, Edith Southey sank painlessly and peacefully to rest. However thankful her husband must have been for such a release from suffering, he did not recover the loss of one who had been for two-thirds of his life his chief object, as he was hers. His friends persuaded him to seek restored health and cheerfulness by going abroad; and on his return to England he paid a visit of some weeks to Buckland Cottage, arriving there in October, 1838.

His spirits revived in the society of his old friend, and a few months later he wrote thus to Walter Savage Landor:—

"Reduced in number as my family has been within the last few years, my spirits would hardly recover their habitual and healthy cheerfulness if I had not prevailed on Miss Bowles to share my lot for the remainder of our lives. There is just such a disparity of age as is fitting. We have been well acquainted with each other more than twenty years, and a more perfect conformity of disposition could not exist: so that in resolving upon what must be either the weakest or the wisest act of a sexagenarian's life, I am well assured that, according to human foresight, I have judged well and acted wisely, both for myself and my remaining daughter."

He naturally did not allude to the fact, that when he first made an offer to Caroline Bowles, she "refused to burden him with an invalid wife." That objection was happily removed by her gaining an unwonted degree of health; and on the 5th of June, 1839, she was married to him at Boldre Church.

The rest of the summer was chiefly spent in paying visits among her relations, to whom her husband now showed himself in his pleasantest character. He was extremely agreeable, when thoroughly at his ease in

society; and he apparently took great interest in the new family circle in which he found himself so cordially welcomed. The first symptoms of failure of memory soon unhappily appeared, but they were looked upon as mere absence of mind, and excited no uneasiness.

Southey had once dedicated a poem to Caroline Bowles, his "kind friend and sister poetess," called "The sinner well saved." It was the story of "the wretched Eliemon who sold his soul to the demon;" and of course belonged to a class of subjects which had a singular attraction for him. He explained that the Satan of the Middle Ages appeared to him a purely mythological personage, whom he had as much right to use as he would have had to introduce Pan or Faunus into a poem. This in some degree accounts for the reasonable offence given by many—too many—of his writings. Quite a new subject was now to engage his own pen and his wife's. They projected and partly accomplished a poem, which was to take up and weave together the legends of our Saxon hero, Robin Hood. Mrs. Southey was full of hope, when he had settled again amongst his old pursuits and friends and books, that he would entirely recover a healthy tone of mind, and all his former vigour; and she still looked forward to many happy years. This, however, as we all know, was a fallacious hope; his mental powers gradually diminished; and although he long enjoyed hearing her read, and nearly to the end loved the sound of her voice and of her name, the torch burnt lower and lower till it was finally extinguished. The last year of his life was passed in a tranquil dreamy state, in which he recognised no one, not even his wife.

Robert Southey died on the 21st of March, 1843, and was borne to his rest on a stormy morning in the beautiful churchyard of Crosthwaite. Few besides his own family and immediate neighbours followed his remains; but his intimate friend Mr. Wordsworth crossed the hills on that wild morning to be present at the funeral.

As soon as her shattered health allowed her to undertake the journey to Hampshire, Mrs. Southey returned to Buckland Cottage. There surrounded by her nearest relations and oldest friends, she gradually recovered the energies of a mind shaken indeed by long anxiety and sorrow, but not weakened.

Her old gaiety was for ever gone, and she shrunk from any new literary exertion. During the remaining years of her life she chiefly occupied herself with arranging a complete edition of her works, including the finished portions of "Robin Hood," and a life of Peter Bell, which she had begun at Keswick.

On her marriage Mrs. Southey had lost an annuity bequeathed to her by a relation of her father's, Colonel Bruce. It was therefore with great satisfaction that she learnt in 1852 that the Queen had conferred on her a pension of two hundred a-year, in consideration of the benefits received by literature from her husband's works. This pension had been granted owing to the unceasing efforts of her brother-in-law, Dr. Southey, on her behalf; and was therefore all the more welcome to her.

She paid at least one visit to London to see the beautiful recumbent statue of Southey which lies above his tomb. The original intention and agreement with Mr. Lough, the sculptor, was, that the monument should be of Caen stone; but with characteristic liberality he executed it in white marble; he presented also a fine cast of the bust to his widow. When the writer of these brief records went to see it at his studio, Mr. Lough remarked how like Mrs. Southey's eye and the expression of her features was to her husband's.

In 1853 Caroline Southey also passed away. Only a few hours before her death she was watching a fine East-Indiaman that had purposely been run aground near the Needles, to avoid swamping a little fishing-boat that crossed her track. She observed to Lady Burrard, who was with her to the last, how impossible it was for her to realise that death was close at hand, with her mind so fully awake to all the interests of life! Her early prayer was fulfilled, as it seemed, to the letter—

> Come not in terrors clad to claim
> An unresisting prey;
> Come like an evening shadow, Death—
> So stealthily, so silently—
> And shut mine eyes, and steal my breath;
> Then willingly, O willingly,
> With thee I'll go away.

She lies in the churchyard at Lymington, surrounded by many generations of her kindred, far away from the storm-swept grave of her poet-friend and husband. But it is right that some memorial of her should be associated with his name and memory.

E. O.

Melancholia.

I.

Saidst thou, The night is ending, day is near?
Nay now, my soul, not so;
We are sunk back into the darkness drear,
And scarcely soon shall know
Even remembrance of the sweet dead day;
Ay, and shall lose full soon
The memory of the moon,
The moon of early night, that cheered our sunless way.

II.

Once, from the brows of Might,
Leapt with a cry to light
Pallas the Forefighter;
Then straight to strive with her
She called the Lord of Sea
In royal rivalry
For Athens, the Supreme of things,
The company of crownless kings.
A splendid strife the Queen began,
In that her kingdom making man
Not less than equal her own line
Inhabiting the hill divine.
Ah Fate, how short a span
Gavest thou then to god and godlike man!
The impious fury of the stormblasts now
Sweeps unrebuked across Olympus' brow;
The fair Forefighter in the strife
For light and grace and glorious life
They sought and found not; she and hers
Had yielded to the troublous years;
No more they walked with men, heaven's high interpreters.

III.

Yet, o'er the gulf of wreck and pain,
How softly strange there rose again,
Against the darkness dimly seen,
Another face, another queen,
The Maiden Mother, in whose eyes
The smile of God reflected lies;
Who saw around her gracious feet
The maddening waves of warfare meet,
And stretching forth her fingers fair
Upon the hushed and wondering air
Shed round her, for man's yearning sight,
A space of splendour in the night.
Are her sweet feet not stayed?
Nay, she is also gone, the Mother-maid:
And with her all the gracious company
That made it hope to live, and joy to die.
The Lord is from the altar gone,
His golden lamp in dust o'erthrown,
The pealing organ's ancient voice
Hath wandered to an empty noise,
And all the angel heads and purple wings are flown.

IV.

Wherefore in this twice-baffled barrenness,
This unconsoled twice-desolate distress,
For our bare world and bleak
We only dare to seek
A little respite for a little while,
Knowing all fair things brief,
And ours most brief, seeing our very smile,
'Mid these our fates forlorn,
Is only child of grief,
And unto grief returneth, hardly born.

V.

We will not have desire for the sweet spring,
Nor mellowing midsummer—
We have no right to her—
The autumn primrose and late-flowering

Pale-leaved inodorous
Violet and rose shall be enough for us:
Enough for our last boon,
That haply where no bird belated grieves,
We watch, through some November afternoon,
The dying sunlight on the dying leaves.

VI.

Ah, heard I then through the sad silence falling
Notes of a new Orpheän melody,
Not up to earth but down to darkness calling,
Down to the fair Elysian company,
Ah then how willing an Eurydice
The kindly ghosts should draw, with noiseless hand,
My shadowy soul into the shadowy land;
For on the earth is endless winter come,
And all sweet sounds, and echoes sweet, are dumb.

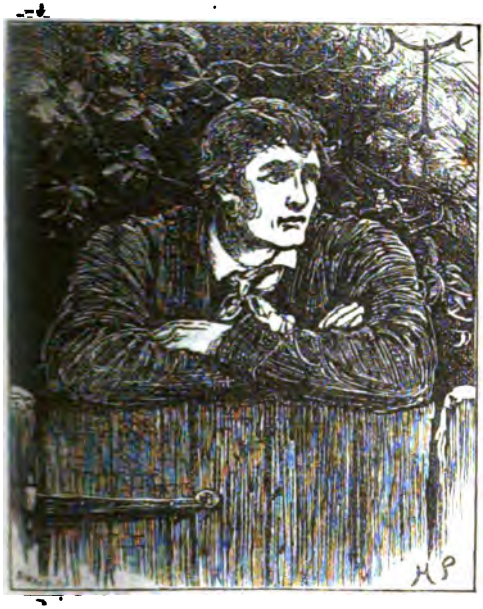
ERNEST MYERS.

"THERE'S NOT A SOUL IN MY HOUSE BUT ME TO-NIGHT."

Far from the Madding Crowd.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Home again: a Juggler.



THAT same evening at dusk Gabriel was leaning over Coggan's garden-gate, taking an up-and-down survey before retiring to rest.

A vehicle of some kind was softly creeping along the grassy margin of the lane. From it spread the tones of two women talking. The tones were natural and not at all suppressed. Oak instantly knew the voices to be those of Bathsheba and Liddy.

The carriage came opposite and passed by. It was Miss Everdene's gig, and Liddy and her mistress were the only occupants of the seat. Liddy was asking questions about the city of Bath, and her companion was answering them listlessly and unconcernedly. Both Bathsheba and the horse seemed weary.

The exquisite relief of finding that she was here again, safe and sound, overpowered all reflection, and Oak could only luxuriate in the sense of it. All grave reports were forgotten.

He lingered and lingered on, till there was no difference between the eastern and western expanses of sky, and the timid hares began to limp courageously round the dim hillocks. Gabriel might have been there an additional half-hour when a dark form walked slowly by. "Good-night, Gabriel," the passer said.

It was Boldwood. "Good-night, sir," said Gabriel.

Boldwood likewise vanished up the road, and Oak shortly afterwards turned indoors to bed.

Farmer Boldwood went on towards Miss Everdene's house. He

reached the front, and approaching the entrance, saw a light in the parlour. The blind was not drawn down, and inside the room was Bathsheba, looking over some papers or letters. Her back was towards Boldwood. He went to the door, knocked, and waited with tense muscles and an aching brow.

Boldwood had not been outside his garden since his meeting with Bathsheba in the road to Yalbury. Silent and alone, he had remained in moody meditation on woman's ways, deeming as essentials of the whole sex the accidents of the single one of their number he had ever closely beheld. By degrees a more charitable temper had pervaded him, and this was the reason of his sally to-night. He had come to apologise and beg forgiveness of Bathsheba with something like a sense of shame at his violence, having but just now learnt that she had returned—only from a visit to Liddy as he supposed, the Bath escapade being quite unknown to him.

He enquired for Miss Everdene. Liddy's manner was odd, but he did not notice it. She went in, leaving him standing there, and in her absence the blind of the room containing Bathsheba was pulled down. Boldwood augured ill from that sign. Liddy came out.

"My mistress cannot see you, sir," she said.

The farmer instantly went out by the gate. He was unforgiven—that was the issue of it all. He had seen her who was to him simultaneously a delight and a torture, sitting in the room he had shared with her as a peculiarly privileged guest only a little earlier in the summer, and she had denied him an entrance there now.

Boldwood did not hurry homeward. It was ten o'clock at least, when, walking deliberately through the lower part of Weatherbury, he heard the carrier's spring-van entering the village. The van ran to and from a town in a northern direction, and it was owned and driven by a Weatherbury man, at the door of whose house it now pulled up. The lamp fixed to the head of the hood illuminated a scarlet and gilded form, who was the first to alight.

"Ah!" said Boldwood to himself, "come to see her again."

Troy entered the carrier's house, which had been the place of his lodging on his last visit to his native place. Boldwood was moved by a sudden determination. He hastened home. In ten minutes he was back again, and made as if he were going to call upon Troy at the carrier's. But as he approached, some one opened the door and came out. He heard this person say, "Good-night" to the inmates, and the voice was Troy's. This was strange, coming so immediately after his arrival. Boldwood, however, hastened up to him. Troy had what appeared to be a carpet-bag in his hand—the same that he had brought with him. It seemed as if he were going to leave again this very night.

Troy turned up the hill and quickened his pace. Boldwood stepped forward.

"Sergeant Troy?"

"Yes—I'm Sergeant Troy."

"Just arrived from Melchester, I think?"

"Just arrived from Bath."

"I am William Boldwood."

"Indeed."

The tone in which this word was uttered was all that had been wanted to bring Boldwood to the point.

"I wish to speak a word with you," he said.

"What about?"

"About her who lives just ahead there—and about a woman you have wronged."

"I wonder at your impertinence," said Troy, moving on.

"Now look here," said Boldwood, standing in front of him, "wonder or not, you are going to hold a conversation with me."

Troy heard the dull determination in Boldwood's voice, looked at his stalwart frame, then at the thick cudgel he carried in his hand. He remembered it was past ten o'clock. It seemed worth while to be civil to Boldwood.

"Very well, I'll listen with pleasure," said Troy, placing his bag on the ground, "only speak low, for somebody or other may overhear us in the farmhouse there."

"Well then—I know a good deal concerning your—Fanny Robin's attachment to you. I may say, too, that I believe I am the only person in the village, excepting Gabriel Oak, who does know it. You ought to marry her."

"I suppose I ought. Indeed, I wish to, but I cannot."

"Why?"

Troy was about to utter something hastily; he then checked himself and said, "I am too poor." His voice was changed. Previously it had had a devil-may-care tone. It was the voice of a trickster now.

Boldwood's present mood was not critical enough to notice tones. He continued, "I may as well speak plainly; and understand, I don't wish to enter into the questions of right or wrong, woman's honour and shame, or to express any opinion on your conduct. I intend a business transaction with you."

"I see," said Troy. "Suppose we sit down here."

An old tree trunk lay under the hedge immediately opposite, and they sat down.

"I was engaged to be married to Miss Everdene," said Boldwood, "but you came and—"

"Not engaged," said Troy.

"As good as engaged."

"If I had not turned up she might have become engaged to you."

"Hang might!"

"Would, then."

"If you had not come I should certainly—yes, *certainly*—have been

accepted by this time. If you had not seen her you might have been married to Fanny. Well, there's too much difference between Miss Everdene's station and your own for this flirtation with her ever to benefit you by ending in marriage. So all I ask is, don't molest her any more. Marry Fanny. I'll make it worth your while."

"How will you?"

"I'll pay you well now, I'll settle a sum of money upon her, and I'll see that you don't suffer from poverty in the future. I'll put it clearly. Bathsheba is only playing with you: you are too poor for her, as I said; so give up wasting your time about a great match you'll never make for a moderate and rightful match you may make to-morrow; take up your carpet-bag, turn about, leave Weatherbury now, this night, and you shall take fifty pounds with you. Fanny shall have fifty to enable her to prepare for the wedding, when you have told me where she is living, and she shall have five hundred paid down on her wedding-day."

In making this statement Boldwood's voice revealed only too clearly a consciousness of the weakness of his position, his aims, and his method. His manner had lapsed quite from that of the firm and dignified Boldwood of former times; and such a scheme as he had now engaged in he would have condemned as childishly imbecile only a few months ago. We discern a grand force in the lover which he lacks whilst a free man; but there is a breadth of vision in the free man which in the lover we vainly seek. Where there is much bias there must be some narrowness, and love, though added emotion, is subtracted capacity. Boldwood exemplified this to an abnormal degree: he knew nothing of Fanny Robin's circumstances or whereabouts, he knew nothing of Troy's possibilities, yet that was what he said.

"I like Fanny best," said Troy; "and if, as you say, Miss Everdene is out of my reach, why I have all to gain by accepting your money, and marrying Fan. But she's only a servant."

"Never mind—do you agree to my arrangement?"

"I do."

"Ah!" said Boldwood, in a more elastic voice. "O Troy, if you like her best, why then did you step in here and injure my happiness?"

"I love Fanny best now," said Troy. "But Bathsh—— Miss Everdene inflamed me, and displaced Fanny for a time. It is over now."

"Why should it be over so soon? And why then did you come here again?"

"There are weighty reasons. Fifty pounds at once, you said?"

"I did," said Boldwood, "and here they are—fifty sovereigns." He handed Troy a small packet.

"You have everything ready—it seems that you calculated on my accepting them," said the sergeant, taking the packet.

"I thought you might accept them," said Boldwood.

"You've only my word that the programme shall be adhered to, whilst I at any rate have fifty pounds."

"I had thought of that, and I have considered that if I can't appeal to your honour I can trust to your—well, shrewdness we'll call it—not to lose five hundred pounds in prospect, and also make a bitter enemy of a man who is willing to be an extremely useful friend."

"Stop, listen!" said Troy in a whisper.

A light pit-pat was audible upon the road just above them.

"By George—'tis she," he continued. "I must go on and meet her."

"She—who?"

"Bathsheba."

"Bathsheba—out alone at this time o' night!" said Boldwood in amazement, and starting up. "Why must you meet her?"

"She was expecting me to-night—and I must now speak to her, and wish her good-bye, according to your wish."

"I don't see the necessity of speaking."

"It can do no harm—and she'll be wandering about looking for me if I don't. You shall hear all I say to her. It will help you in your love-making when I am gone."

"Your tone is mocking."

"O no. And remember this, if she does not know what has become of me, she will think more about me than if I tell her flatly I have come to give her up."

"Will you confine your words to that one point?—Shall I hear every word you say?"

"Every word. Now sit still there, and hold my carpet-bag for me, and mark what you hear."

The light footstep came closer, halting occasionally, as if the walker listened for a sound. Troy whistled a double note in a soft fluty tone.

"Come to that, is it!" murmured Boldwood, uneasily.

"You promised silence," said Troy.

"I promise again."

Troy stepped forward.

"Frank, dearest, is that you?" The tones were Bathsheba's.

"O God!" said Boldwood.

"Yes," said Troy to her.

"How late you are," she continued tenderly. "Did you come by the carrier? I listened and heard his wheels entering the village, but it was some time ago, and I had almost given you up, Frank."

"I was sure to come," said Frank. "You knew I should, did you not?"

"Well, I thought you would," she said, playfully; "and, Frank, it is so lucky! There's not a soul in my house but me to-night. I've packed them all off, so nobody on earth will know of your visit to your lady's bower. Liddy wanted to go to her grandfather's to tell him about her holiday, and I said she might stay with them till to-morrow—when you'll be gone again."

"Capital," said Troy. "But, dear me, I had better go back for my

bag: you run home whilst I fetch it, and I'll promise to be in your parlour in ten minutes."

"Yes." She turned and tripped up the hill again.

During the progress of this dialogue there was a nervous twitching of Boldwood's tightly closed lips, and his face became bathed in a clammy dew. He now started forward towards Troy. Troy turned to him and took up the bag.

"Shall I tell her I have come to give her up and cannot marry her?" said the soldier, mockingly.

"No, no; wait a minute. I want to say more to you—more to you," said Boldwood, in a hoarse whisper.

"Now," said Troy, "You see my dilemma. Perhaps I am a bad man—the victim of my impulses—led away to do what I ought to leave undone. I can't, however, marry them both. And I have two reasons for choosing Fanny. First, I like her best upon the whole, and second, you make it worth my while."

At the same instant Boldwood sprang upon him, and held him by the neck. Troy felt Boldwood's grasp slowly tightening. The move was absolutely unexpected.

"A moment," he gasped. "You are injuring her you love."

"Well, what do you mean?" said the farmer.

"Give me breath," said Troy.

Boldwood loosened his hand, saying, "By Heaven, I've a mind to kill you!"

"And ruin her."

"Save her."

"Oh, how can she be saved now, unless I marry her?"

Boldwood groaned. He reluctantly released the soldier, and flung him back against the hedge. "Devil, you torture me!" said he.

Troy rebounded like a ball, and was about to make a dash at the farmer; but he checked himself, saying lightly—

"It is not worth while to measure my strength with you. Indeed it is a barbarous way of settling a quarrel. I shall shortly leave the army because of the same conviction. Now after that revelation of how the land lies with Bathsheba, 'twould be a mistake to kill me, would it not?"

"'Twould be a mistake to kill you," repeated Boldwood, mechanically, with a bowed head.

"Better kill yourself."

"Far better."

"I'm glad you see it."

"Troy, make her your wife, and don't act upon what I arranged just now. The alternative is dreadful, but take Bathsheba; I give her up. She must love you indeed to sell soul and body to you so utterly as she has done. Wretched woman—deluded woman—you are, Bathsheba!"

"But about Fanny?"

"Bathsheba is a woman well to do," continued Boldwood, in nervous

anxiety, "and, Troy, she will make a good wife; and, indeed, she is worth your hastening on your marriage with her!"

"But she has a will—not to say a temper, and I shall be a mere slave to her. I could do anything with poor Fanny Robin."

"Troy," said Boldwood, imploringly, "I'll do anything for you, only don't desert her; pray don't desert her, Troy."

"Which, poor Fanny?"

"No; Bathsheba Everdene. Love her best! Love her tenderly! How shall I get you to see how advantageous it will be to you to secure her at once?"

"I don't wish to secure her in any new way."

Boldwood's arm moved spasmodically towards Troy's person again. He repressed the instinct, and his form drooped as with pain.

Troy went on—

"I shall soon purchase my discharge, and then——"

"But I wish you to hasten on this marriage. It will be better for you both. You love each other, and you must let me help you to do it."

"How?"

"Why, by settling the five hundred on Bathsheba instead of Fanny to enable you to marry at once. No, she wouldn't have it of me; I'll pay it down to you on the wedding-day."

Troy paused in secret amazement at Boldwood's wild and purblind infatuation. He carelessly said, "And am I to have anything now?"

"Yes, if you wish to. But I have not much additional money with me. I did not expect this; but all I have is yours."

Boldwood, more like a somnambulist than a wakeful man, pulled out the large canvas bag he carried by way of a purse, and searched it.

"I have twenty-one pounds more with me," he said. "Two notes and a sovereign. But before I leave you I must have a paper signed ——"

"Pay me the money, and we'll go straight to her parlour, and make any arrangement you please to secure my compliance with your wishes. But she must know nothing of this cash business."

"Nothing, nothing," said Boldwood, hastily. "Here is the sum, and if you'll come to my house we'll write out the agreement for the remainder, and the terms also."

"First we'll call upon her."

"But why? Come with me to-night, and go with me to-morrow to the surrogate's."

"But she must be consulted; at any rate informed."

"Very well; go on."

They went up the hill to Bathsheba's house. When they stood at the entrance, Troy said, "Wait here a moment." Opening the door, he glided inside, leaving the door ajar.

Boldwood waited. In two minutes a light appeared in the passage. Boldwood then saw that the chain had been fastened across the door. Troy appeared inside, carrying a bedroom candlestick.

"What, did you think I should break in?" said Boldwood, contemptuously.

"O no; it is merely my humour to secure things. Will you read this a moment? I'll hold the light."

Troy handed a folded newspaper through the slit between door and doorpost, and put the candle close. "That's the paragraph," he said, placing his finger on a line.

Boldwood looked and read—

"MARRIAGES.

"On the 17th inst., at St. Ambrose's Church, Bath, by the Rev. G. Mincing, B.A., Francis Troy, only son of the late Edward Troy, Esq., M.D., of Weatherbury, and sergeant 11th Dragoon Guards, to Bathsheba, only surviving daughter of the late Mr. John Everdene, of Casterbridge."

"This may be called Fort meeting Feeble, hey, Boldwood?" said Troy. A low gurgle of derisive laughter followed the words.

The paper fell from Boldwood's hand. Troy continued—

"Fifty pounds to marry Fanny. Good. Twenty-one pounds not to marry Fanny, but Bathsheba. Good. Finale: already Bathsheba's husband. Now Boldwood, yours is the ridiculous fate which always attends interference between a man and his wife. And another word. Bad as I am, I am not such a villain as to make the marriage or misery of any woman a matter of huckster and sale. Fanny has long ago left me. I don't know where she is. I have searched everywhere. Another word yet. You say you love Bathsheba; yet on the merest apparent evidence you instantly believe in her dishonour. A fig for such love! Now that I've taught you a lesson, take your money back again."

"I will not; I will not!" said Boldwood, in a hiss.

"Anyhow I won't have it," said Troy, contemptuously. He wrapped the packet of gold in the notes, and threw the whole into the road.

Boldwood shook his clenched fist at him. "You juggler of Satan! You black hound! But I'll punish you yet; mark me, I'll punish you yet!"

Another peal of laughter. Troy then closed the door, and locked himself in.

Throughout the whole of that night Boldwood's dark form might have been seen walking about the hills and downs of Weatherbury like an unhappy Shade in the Mournful Fields by Acheron.

CHAPTER XXXV.

At an Upper Window.

It was very early the next morning—a time of sun and dew. The confused beginnings of many birds' songs spread into the healthy air, and the wan blue of the heaven was here and there coated with thin webs of

incorporeal cloud which were of no effect in obscuring day. All the lights in the scene were yellow as to colour, and all the shadows were attenuated as to form. The creeping plants about the old manor-house were bowed with rows of heavy water drops, which had upon objects behind them the effect of minute lenses of high magnifying power.

Just before the clock struck five Gabriel Oak and Coggan passed the village cross, and went on together to the fields. They were yet barely in view of their mistress's house, when Oak fancied he saw the opening of a casement in one of the upper windows. The two men were at this moment partially screened by an elder bush, now beginning to be enriched with black bunches of fruit, and they paused before emerging from its shade.

A handsome man leaned idly from the lattice. He looked east and then west, in the manner of one who makes a first morning survey. The man was Sergeant Troy. His red jacket was loosely thrown on, but not buttoned, and he had altogether the relaxed bearing of a soldier taking his ease.

Coggan spoke first, looking quietly at the window.

"She has married him!" he said.

Gabriel had previously beheld the sight, and he now stood with his back turned, making no reply.

"I fancied we should know something to-day," continued Coggan. "I heard wheels pass my door just after dark—you were out somewhere." He glanced round upon Gabriel. "Good Heavens above us, Oak, how white your face is; you look like a corpse!"

"Do I?" said Oak, with a faint smile.

"Lean on the gate: I'll wait a bit."

"All right, all right."

They stood by the gate awhile, Gabriel listlessly staring at the ground. His mind sped into the future, and saw there enacted in years of leisure the scenes of repentance that would ensue from this work of haste. That they were married he had instantly decided. Why had it been so mysteriously managed? It was not at all Bathsheba's way of doing things. With all her faults, she was candour itself. Could she have been entrapped? The union was not only an unutterable grief to him: it amazed him, notwithstanding that he had passed the preceding week in a suspicion that such might be the issue of Troy's meeting her away from home. Her quiet return with Liddy had to some extent dispersed the dread. Just as that imperceptible motion which appears like stillness is infinitely divided in its properties from stillness itself, so had struggling hopes against the imagined deed differentiated it entirely from the thing actually done.

In a few minutes they moved on again towards the house. The sergeant still looked from the window.

"Morning, comrades!" he shouted, in a cheery voice, when they came up.

Coggan replied to the greeting. "Baint ye going to answer the man?" he then said to Gabriel. "I'd say good-morning—you needn't spend a hapeth of meaning upon it, and yet keep the man civil."

Gabriel soon decided too that, since the deed was done, to put the best face upon the matter would be the greatest kindness to her he loved.

"Good-morning, Sergeant Troy," he returned, in a ghastly voice.

"A rambling gloomy house this," said Troy, smiling.

"Why—they *may* not be married!" suggested Coggan. "Perhaps she's not there."

Gabriel shook his head. The soldier turned a little towards the east, and the sun kindled his scarlet coat to an orange glow.

"But it is a nice old house," responded Gabriel.

"Yes—I suppose so; but I feel like new wine in an old bottle here. My notion is that sash-windows should be put throughout, and these old wainscoted walls brightened up a bit; or the oak cleared quite away, and the walls papered."

"It would be a pity, I think."

"Well, no. A philosopher once said in my hearing that the old builders, who worked when art was a living thing, had no respect for the work of builders who went before them, but pulled down and altered as they thought fit; and why shouldn't we? 'Creation and preservation don't do well together,' says he, 'and a million of antiquarians can't invent a style.' My mind exactly. I am for making this place more modern, that we may be cheerful whilst we can."

The military man turned and surveyed the interior of the room, to assist his ideas of improvement in this direction. Gabriel and Coggan began to move on.

"Oh, Coggan," said Troy, as if inspired by a recollection, "do you know if insanity has ever appeared in Mr. Boldwood's family?"

Jan reflected for a moment.

"I once heard that an uncle of his was queer in his head, but I don't know the rights o't," he said.

"It is of no importance," said Troy lightly. "Well, I shall be down in the fields with you some time this week; but I have a few matters to attend to first. So good-day to you. We shall, of course, keep on just as friendly terms as usual. I'm not a proud man: nobody is ever able to say that of Sergeant Troy. However, what is must be, and here's half-a-crown to drink my health, men."

Troy threw the coin dexterously across the front plot towards Gabriel, who shunned it in its fall, his face turning to an angry red. Coggan twirled his eye, edged forward, and caught the money in its ricochet upon the grass.

"Very well—you keep it, Coggan," said Gabriel with disdain, and almost fiercely. "As for me, I'll do without gifts from him."

"Don't show it too much," said Coggan, musingly. "For if he's married to her, mark my words, he'll buy his discharge and be our master

here. Therefore 'tis well to say 'Friend' outwardly, though you say 'Troublehouse' within."

"Well—perhaps it is best to be silent; but I can't go further than that. I can't flatter, and if my place here is only to be kept by smoothing him down, my place must be lost."

A horseman, whom they had for some time seen in the distance, now appeared close beside them.

"There's Mr. Boldwood," said Oak. "I wonder what Troy meant by his question."

Coggan and Oak nodded respectfully to the farmer, just checked their paces to discover if they were wanted, and finding they were not, stood back to let him pass on.

The only signs of the terrible sorrow Boldwood had been combating through the night and was combating now were the want of colour in his well-defined face, the enlarged appearance of the veins in his forehead and temples, and the sharper lines about his mouth. The horse bore him away, and the very step of the animal seemed significant of dogged despair. Gabriel, for a minute, rose above his own grief in noticing Boldwood's. He saw the square figure sitting erect upon the horse, the head turned to neither side, the elbows steady by the hips, the brim of the hat level and undisturbed in its onward glide, until the keen edges of Boldwood's shape sank by degrees over the hill. To one who knew the man and his story there was something more striking in this immobility than in a collapse. The clash of discord between mood and matter here was forced painfully home to the heart; and, as in laughter there are more dreadful phases than in tears, so was there in the steadiness of this agonised man an expression deeper than a cry.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Wealth in Jeopardy: the Revel.

One night, at the end of August, when Bathsheba's experiences as a married woman were still new, and when the weather was yet dry and sultry, a man stood motionless in the stackyard of Weatherbury Upper Farm, looking at the moon and sky.

The night had a sinister aspect. A heated breeze from the south slowly fanned the summits of lofty objects, and in the sky dashes of buoyant cloud were sailing in a course at right angles to that of another stratum, neither of them in the direction of the breeze below. The moon, as seen through these films, had a lurid metallic look. The fields were sallow with the impure light, and all were tinged in monochrome, as if beheld through stained glass. The same evening the sheep had trailed homeward head to tail, the behaviour of the rooks had been confused, and the horses had moved with timidity and caution.

Thunder was imminent, and, taking some secondary appearances into consideration, it was likely to be followed by one of the lengthened rains which mark the close of dry weather for the season. Before twelve hours had passed a harvest atmosphere would be a bygone thing.

Oak gazed with misgiving at eight naked and unprotected ricks, massive and heavy with the rich produce of one-half the farm for that year. He went on to the barn.

This was the night which had been selected by Sergeant Troy—ruling now in the room of his wife—for giving the harvest-supper and dance. As Oak approached the building, the sound of violins and a tambourine, and the regular jigging of many feet, grew more distinct. He came close to the large doors, one of which stood slightly ajar, and looked in.

The central space, together with the recess at one end, was emptied of all encumbrances, and this area, covering about two-thirds of the whole, was appropriated for the gathering, the remaining end, which was piled to the ceiling with oats, being screened off with sail-cloth. Tufts and garlands of green foliage decorated the walls, beams, and extemporized chandeliers, and immediately opposite to Oak a rostrum had been erected, bearing a table and chairs. Here sat three fiddlers, and beside them stood a frantic man with his hair on end, perspiration streaming down his cheeks, and a tambourine quivering in his hand.

The dance ended, and on the black oak floor in the midst a new row of couples formed for another.

"Now ma'am, and no offence I hope, I ask what dance you would like next?" said the first violin.

"Really, it makes no difference," said the clear voice of Bathsheba, who stood at the inner end of the building, observing the scene from behind a table covered with cups and viands. Troy was lolling beside her.

"Then," said the fiddler, "I'll venture to name that the right and proper thing is 'The Soldier's Joy'—there being a gallant soldier married into the farm—hey, my sonnies, and gentlemen all?"

"It shall be 'The Soldier's Joy,'" exclaimed a chorus.

"Thanks for the compliment," said the sergeant gaily, taking Bathsheba by the hand and leading her to the top of the dance. "For though I have purchased my discharge from Her Most Gracious Majesty's regiment of cavalry, the 11th Dragoon Guards, to attend to the new duties awaiting me here, I shall continue a soldier in spirit and feeling as long as I live."

So the dance began. As to the merits of "The Soldier's Joy," there cannot be, and never were, two opinions. It has been observed in the musical circles of Weatherbury and its vicinity that this melody, at the end of three-quarters of an hour of thunderous footing, still possesses more stimulative properties for the heel and toe than the majority of other dances at their first opening. "The Soldier's Joy" has, too, an additional charm, in being so admirably adapted to the tambourine aforesaid—no mean instrument in the hands of a performer who understands the

proper convulsions, spasms, St. Vitus's dances, and fearful frenzies necessary when exhibiting its tones in their highest perfection.

The immortal tune ended, a fine DD rolling forth from the bass-viol with the sonorousness of a cannonade, and Gabriel delayed his entry no longer. He avoided Bathsheba, and got as near as possible to the platform, where Sergeant Troy was now seated, drinking brandy-and-water, though the others drank without exception cider and ale. Gabriel could not easily thrust himself within speaking distance of the sergeant, and he sent a message, asking him to come down for a moment. The sergeant said he could not attend.

"Will you tell him, then," said Gabriel, "that I only stepped ath'art to say that a heavy rain is sure to fall soon, and that something should be done to protect the ricks?"

"Mr. Troy says it will not rain," returned the messenger, "and he cannot stop to talk to you about such fidgets."

In juxtaposition with Troy, Oak had a melancholy tendency to look like a candle beside gas, and ill at ease, he went out again, thinking he would go home; for, under the circumstances, he had no heart for the scene n the barn. At the door he paused for a moment: Troy was speaking.

"Friends, it is not only the Harvest Home that we are celebrating to-night; but this is also a Wedding Feast. A short time ago I had the happiness to lead to the altar this lady, your mistress, and not until now have we been able to give any public flourish to the event in Weatherbury. That it may be thoroughly well done, and that every man may go happy to bed, I have ordered to be brought here some bottles of brandy and kettles of hot water. A treble-strong goblet will be handed round to each guest."

Bathsheba put her hand upon his arm, and, with upturned pale face, said imploringly, "No—don't give it to them—pray don't, Frank. It will only do them harm: they have had enough of everything."

"Trew—we don't wish for no more, thank ye," said one or two.

"Pooh!" said the sergeant contemptuously, and raised his voice as if lighted up by a new idea. "Friends," he said, "we'll send the women-folk home! 'Tis time they were in bed. Then we cockbirds will have a jolly carouse to ourselves. If any of the men show the white feather, let them look elsewhere for a winter's work."

Bathsheba indignantly left the barn, followed by all the women and children. The musicians, not looking upon themselves as "company," slipped quietly away to their spring waggon and put in the horse. Thus Troy and the men on the farm were left sole occupants of the place. Oak, not to appear unnecessarily disagreeable, stayed a little while; then he, too, arose and quietly took his departure, followed by a friendly oath from the sergeant for not staying to a second round of grog.

Gabriel proceeded towards his home. In approaching the door, his toe kicked something which felt and sounded soft, leathery, and distended, like a boxing-glove. It was a large toad humbly travelling across the

path. Oak took it up, thinking it might be better to kill the creature to save it from pain; but finding it uninjured, he placed it again among the grass. He knew what this direct message from the Great Mother meant. And soon came another.

When he struck a light indoors there appeared upon the table a thin glistening streak, as if a brush of varnish had been lightly dragged across it. Oak's eyes followed the serpentine sheen to the other side, where it led up to a huge brown garden-slug, which had come indoors to-night for reasons of its own. It was Nature's second way of hinting to him that he was to prepare for foul weather.

Oak sat down meditating for nearly an hour. During this time two black spiders, of the kind common in thatched houses, promenaded the ceiling, ultimately dropping to the floor. This reminded him that if there was one class of manifestation on this matter that he thoroughly understood, it was the instincts of sheep. He left the room, ran across two or three fields towards the flock, got upon a hedge, and looked over among them.

They were crowded close together on the other side around some furze bushes, and the first peculiarity observable was that, on the sudden appearance of Oak's head over the fence, they did not stir or run away. They had now a terror of something greater than their terror of man. But this was not the most noteworthy feature: they were all grouped in such a way that their tails, without a single exception, were towards that half of the horizon from which the storm threatened. There was an inner circle closely huddled, and outside these they radiated wider apart, the pattern formed by the flock as a whole being not unlike a vandyked lace collar, to which the clump of furze-bushes stood in the position of a wearer's neck.

This was enough to re-establish him in his original opinion. He knew now that he was right, and that Troy was wrong. Every voice in nature was unanimous in bespeaking change. But two distinct translations attached to these dumb expressions. Apparently there was to be a thunder-storm, and afterwards a cold continuous rain. The creeping things seemed to know all about the latter rain, but little of the interpolated thunder-storm; whilst the sheep knew all about the thunder-storm and nothing of the latter rain.

This complication of weathers being uncommon, was all the more to be feared. Oak returned to the stack-yard. All was silent here, and the conical tips of the ricks jutted darkly into the sky. There were five wheat-ricks in this yard, and three stacks of barley. The wheat when threshed would average about thirty quarters to each stack; the barley, at least forty. Their value to Bathsheba, and indeed to anybody, Oak mentally estimated by the following simple calculation:—

$$5 \times 30 = 150 \text{ quarters} = 500l.$$
$$8 \times 40 = 120 \text{ quarters} = 250l.$$

Total 750*l.*

Seven hundred and fifty pounds in the divinest form that money can wear—that of necessary food for man and beast: should the risk be run of deteriorating this bulk of corn to less than half its value, because of the instability of a woman? "Never, if I can prevent it!" said Gabriel.

Such was the argument that Oak set outwardly before him. But man, even to himself, is a cryptographic page having an ostensible writing, and another between the lines. It is possible that there was this golden legend under the utilitarian one: "I will help, to my last effort, the woman I have loved so dearly."

He went back to the barn to endeavour to obtain assistance for covering the ricks that very night. All was silent within, and he would have passed on in the belief that the party had broken up, had not a dim light, yellow as saffron by contrast with the greenish whiteness outside, streamed through a knot-hole in the folding doors.

Gabriel looked in. An offensive picture met his eye.

The candles suspended among the evergreens had burnt down to their sockets, and in some cases the leaves tied about them were scorched. Many of the lights had quite gone out, others smoked and stank, grease dropping from them upon the floor. Here, under the table, and leaning against forms and chairs in every conceivable attitude except the perpendicular, were the wretched persons of all the workfolk, the hair of their heads at such low levels being suggestive of mops and brooms. In the midst of these shone red and distinct the figure of Sergeant Troy, leaning back in a chair. Coggan was on his back, with his mouth open, buzzing forth snores, as were several others; the united breathings of the horizontal assemblage forming a subdued roar like London from a distance. Joseph Poorgrass was curled round in the fashion of a hedgehog, apparently in attempts to present the least possible portion of his surface to the air; and behind him was dimly visible an unimportant remnant of William Smallbury. The glasses and cups still stood upon the table, a water-jug being overturned, from which a small rill, after tracing its course with marvellous precision down the centre of the long table, fell into the neck of the unconscious Mark Clark, in a steady, monotonous drip, like the dripping of a stalactite in a cave.

Gabriel glanced hopelessly at the group, which, with one or two exceptions, composed all the able-bodied men upon the farm. He saw at once that if the ricks were to be saved that night, or even the next morning, he must save them with his own hands.

A faint "ting-ting" resounded from under Coggan's waistcoat. It was Coggan's watch striking the hour of two.

Oak went to the recumbent form of Matthew Moon, who usually undertook the rough thatching of the homestead, and shook him. The shaking was without effect.

Gabriel shouted in his ear, "Where's your thatching-beetle and rick-stick and spars?"

"Under the staddles," said Moon mechanically, with the unconscious promptness of a medium.

Gabriel let go his head, and it dropped upon the floor like a bowl. He then went to Susan Tall's husband.

"Where's the key of the granary?"

No answer. The question was repeated, with the same result. To be shouted to at night was evidently less of a novelty to Susan Tall's husband than to Matthew Moon. Oak flung down Tall's head into the corner again and turned away.

To be just, the men were not greatly to blame for this painful and demoralising termination to the evening's entertainment. Sergeant Troy had so strenuously insisted, glass in hand, that drinking should be the bond of their union, that those who wished to refuse hardly liked to be so unmannerly under the circumstances. Having from their youth up been entirely unaccustomed to any liquor stronger than cider or mild ale, it was no wonder that they had succumbed, one and all with extraordinary uniformity, after the lapse of about an hour.

Gabriel was greatly depressed. This debauch boded ill for that wilful and fascinating mistress whom the faithful man even now felt within him as the embodiment of all that was sweet and bright and hopeless.

He put out the expiring lights, that the barn might not be endangered, closed the door upon the men in their deep and oblivious sleep, and went again into the lone night. A hot breeze, as if breathed from the parted lips of some dragon about to swallow the globe, fanned him from the south, while directly opposite in the north rose a grim misshapen body of cloud, in the very teeth of the wind. So unnaturally did it rise that one could fancy it to be lifted by machinery from below. Meanwhile the faint cloudlets had flown back into the south-east corner of the sky, as if in terror of the large cloud, like a young brood gazed in upon by some monster.

Going on to the village, Oak flung a small stone against the window of Laban Tall's bedroom, expecting Susan to open it; but nobody stirred. He went round to the back door, which had been left unfastened for Laban's entry, and passed in to the foot of the staircase.

"Mrs. Tall, I've come for the key of the granary, to get at the rick-cloths," said Oak, in a stentorian voice.

"Is that you?" said Mrs. Susan Tall, half awake.

"Yes," said Gabriel.

"Come along to bed, do, you draw-latching rogue—keeping a body awake like this!"

"It isn't Laban—'tis Gabriel Oak. I want the key of the granary."

"Gabriel! What in the name of fortune did you pretend to be Laban for?"

"I didn't. I thought you meant ——"

"Yes you did. What do you want here?"

"The key of the granary."

"Take it, then. 'Tis on the nail. People coming disturbing women at this time of night ought ——"

Gabriel took the key, without waiting to hear the conclusion of the tirade. Ten minutes later his lonely figure might have been seen dragging four large waterproof coverings across the yard, and soon two of these heaps of treasure in grain were covered snug—two cloths to each. Two hundred pounds were secured. Three wheat-stacks remained open, and there were no more cloths. Oak looked under the staddles and found a fork. He mounted the third pile of wealth and began operating, adopting the plan of sloping the upper sheaves one over the other; and, in addition, filling the interstices with the material of some untied sheaves.

So far all was well. By this hurried contrivance Bathsheba's property in wheat was safe for at any rate a week or two, provided always that there was not much wind.

Next came the barley. This it was only possible to protect by systematic thatching. Time went on, and the moon vanished not to re-appear. It was the farewell of the ambassador previous to war. The night had a haggard look, like a sick thing; and there came finally an utter expiration of air from the whole heaven in the form of a slow breeze, which might have been likened to a death. And now nothing was heard in the yard but the dull thuds of the beetle which drove in the spars, and the rustle of the thatch in the intervals.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE STORM: THE TWO TOGETHER.

A LIGHT flapped over the scene, as if reflected from phosphorescent wings crossing the sky, and a rumble filled the air. It was the first arrow from the approaching storm, and it fell wide.

The second peal was noisy, with comparatively little visible lightning. Gabriel saw a candle shining in Bathsheba's bedroom, and soon a shadow moved to and fro upon the blind.

Then there came a third flash. Manœuvres of a most extraordinary kind were going on in the vast firmamental hollows overhead. The lightning now was the colour of silver, and gleamed in the heavens like a mailed army. Rumbles became rattles. Gabriel from his elevated position could see over the landscape for at least half-a-dozen miles in front. Every hedge, bush, and tree was distinct as in a line engraving. In a paddock in the same direction was a herd of heifers, and the forms of these were visible at this moment in the act of galloping about in the wildest and maddest confusion, flinging their heels and tails high into the air, their heads to earth. A poplar in the immediate foreground was like an ink stroke on burnished tin. Then the picture vanished, leaving a darkness so intense that Gabriel worked entirely by feeling with his hands.

He had stuck his ricking-rod, groom, or poignard, as it was indifferently called—a long iron lance, sharp at the extremity and polished by handling—into the stack to support the sheaves. A blue light appeared in the zenith, and in some indescribable manner flickered down near the top of the rod. It was the fourth of the larger flashes. A moment later and there was a smack—smart, clear, and short. Gabriel felt his position to be anything but a safe one, and he resolved to descend.

Not a drop of rain had fallen as yet. He wiped his weary brow, and looked again at the black forms of the unprotected stacks. Was his life so valuable to him, after all? What were his prospects that he should be so chary of running risk, when important and urgent labour could not be carried on without such risk? He resolved to stick to the stack. However, he took a precaution. Under the staddles was a long tethering chain, used to prevent the escape of errant horses. This he carried up the ladder, and sticking his rod through the clog at one end, allowed the other end of the chain to trail upon the ground. The spike attached to it he drove in. Under the shadow of this extemporized lightning-conductor he felt himself comparatively safe.

Before Oak had laid his hands upon his tools again out leapt the fifth flash, with the spring of a serpent and the shout of a fiend. It was green as an emerald, and the reverberation was stunning. What was this the light revealed to him? In the open ground before him, as he looked over the ridge of the rick, was a dark and apparently female form. Could it be that of the only venturesome woman in the parish—Bathsheba? The form moved on a step: then he could see no more.

"Is that you, ma'am?" said Gabriel, to the darkness.

"Who is there?" said the voice of Bathsheba.

"Gabriel. I am on the rick, thatching."

"Oh, Gabriel!—and are you? I have come about them. The weather awoke me, and I thought of the corn. I am so distressed about it—can we save it anyhow? I cannot find my husband. Is he with you?"

"He is not here."

"Do you know where he is?"

"Asleep in the barn."

"He promised that the stacks should be seen to, and now they are all neglected! Can I do anything to help? Liddy is afraid to come out. Fancy finding you here at such an hour! Surely I can do something?"

"You can bring up some reed-sheaves to me, one by one, ma'am; if you are not afraid to come up the ladder in the dark," said Gabriel. "Every moment is precious now, and that would save a good deal of time. It is not very dark when the lightning has been gone a bit."

"I'll do anything!" she said, resolutely. She instantly took a sheaf upon her shoulder, clambered up close to his heels, placed it behind the rod, and descended for another. At her third ascent the rick suddenly brightened with the brazen glare of shining majolica—every knot in every straw was visible. On the slope in front of him appeared two human

shapes, black as jet. The rick lost its sheen—the shapes vanished. Gabriel turned his head. It had been the sixth flash which had come from the east behind him, and the two dark forms on the slope had been the shadows of himself and Bathsheba.

Then came the peal. It hardly was credible that such a heavenly light could be the parent of such a diabolical sound.

"How terrible!" she exclaimed, and clutched him by the sleeve. Gabriel turned, and steadied her on her aërial perch by holding her arm. At the same moment, while he was still reversed in his attitude, there was more light, and he saw as it were a copy of the tall poplar tree on the hill drawn in black on the wall of the barn. It was the shadow of that tree, thrown across by a secondary flash in the west.

The next flare came. Bathsheba was on the ground now, shouldering another sheaf, and she bore its dazzle without flinching—thunder and all—and again ascended with the load. There was then a silence everywhere for four or five minutes, and the crunch of the spars, as Gabriel hastily drove them in, could again be distinctly heard. He thought the crisis of the storm had passed. But there came a burst of light.

"Hold on!" said Gabriel, taking the sheaf from her shoulder, and grasping her arm again.

Heaven opened then, indeed. The flash was almost too novel for its inexpressibly dangerous nature to be at once realised, and Gabriel could only comprehend the magnificence of its beauty. It sprang from east, west, north, south. It was a perfect dance of death. The forms of skeletons appeared in the air, shaped with blue fire for bones—dancing, leaping, striding, racing around, and mingling altogether in unparalleled confusion. With these were intertwined undulating snakes of green. Behind these was a broad mass of lesser light. Simultaneously came from every part of the tumbling sky what may be called a shout; since, though no shout ever came near it, it was more of the nature of a shout than of anything else earthly. In the meantime one of the grisly forms had alighted upon the point of Gabriel's rod, to run invisibly down it, down the chain, and into the earth. Gabriel was almost blinded, and he could feel Bathsheba's warm arm tremble in his hand—a sensation novel and thrilling enough; but love, life, everything human, seemed small and trifling in such close juxtaposition with an infuriated universe.

Oak had hardly time to gather up these impressions into a thought, and to see how strangely the red feather of her hat shone in this light, when the tall tree on the hill before-mentioned seemed on fire to a white heat, and a new one among these terrible voices mingled with the last crash of those preceding. It was a stupefying blast, harsh and pitiless, and it fell upon their ears in a dead, flat blow, without that reverberation which lends the tones of a drum to more distant thunder. By the lustre reflected from every part of the earth and from the wide domical scoop above it, he saw that the tree was sliced down the whole length of its tall straight stem, a huge riband of bark being apparently flung off. The other portion

remained erect, and revealed the bared surface as a strip of white down the front. The lightning had struck the tree. A sulphurous smell filled the air: then all was silent, and black as a cave in Hinnom.

"We had a narrow escape!" said Gabriel hurriedly. "You had better go down."

Bathsheba said nothing; but he could distinctly hear her rhythmical pants, and the recurrent rustle of the sheaf beside her in response to her frightened pulsations. She descended the ladder, and, on second thoughts, he followed her. The darkness was now impenetrable by the sharpest vision. They both stood still at the bottom, side by side. Bathsheba appeared to think only of the weather—Oak thought only of her just then. At last he said,

"The storm seems to have passed now, at any rate."

"I think so too," said Bathsheba. "Though there are multitudes of gleams, look!"

The sky was now filled with an incessant light, frequent repetition melting into complete continuity, as an unbroken sound results from the successive strokes on a gong.

"Nothing serious," said he. "I cannot understand no rain falling. But, heaven be praised, it is all the better for us. I am now going up again."

"Gabriel, you are kinder than I deserve! I will stay and help you yet. O, why are not some of the others here!"

"They would have been here if they could," said Oak, in a hesitating way.

"O, I know it all—all," she said, adding slowly: "They are all asleep in the barn, in a drunken sleep, and my husband among them. That's it, is it not? Don't think I am a timid woman, and can't endure things."

"I am not certain," said Gabriel. "I will go and see."

He crossed to the barn, leaving her there alone. He looked through the chinks of the door. All was in total darkness, as he had left it, and there still arose, as at the former time, the steady buzz of many snores.

He felt a zephyr curling about his cheek, and turned. It was Bathsheba's breath—she had followed him, and was looking into the same chink.

He endeavoured to put off the immediate and painful subject of their thoughts by remarking gently, "If you'll come back again, miss—ma'am, and hand up a few more; it would save much time."

Then Oak went back again, ascended to the top, stepped off the ladder for greater expedition, and went on thatching. She followed, but without a sheaf.

"Gabriel," she said, in a strange and impressive voice.

Oak looked up at her. She had not spoken since he left the barn. The soft and continual shimmer of the dying lightning showed a marble face high against the black sky of the opposite quarter. Bathsheba was

sitting almost on the apex of the stack, her feet gathered up beneath her, and resting on the top round of the ladder.

"Yes, mistress," he said.

"I suppose you thought that when I galloped away to Bath that night it was on purpose to be married?"

"I did at last—not at first," he answered, somewhat surprised at the abruptness with which this new subject was broached.

"And others thought so, too?"

"Yes."

"And you blamed me for it?"

"Well—a little."

"I thought so. Now, I care a little for your good opinion, and I want to explain something—I have longed to do it ever since I returned, and you looked so gravely at me. For if I were to die—and I may die soon—it would be dreadful that you should always think mistakingly of me. Now, listen."

Gabriel ceased his rustling.

"I went to Bath that night in the full intention of breaking off my engagement to Mr. Troy. It was owing to circumstances which occurred after I got there that—that we were married. Now, do you see the matter in a new light?"

"I do—somewhat."

"I must, I suppose, say more, now that I have begun. And perhaps it's no harm, for you are certainly under no delusion that I ever loved you, or that I can have any object in speaking, more than that object I have mentioned. Well, I was alone in a strange city, and the horse was lame. And at last I didn't know what to do. I saw, when it was too late, that scandal might seize hold of me for meeting him alone in that way. But I was coming away, when he suddenly said he had that day seen a woman more beautiful than I, and that his constancy could not be counted on unless I at once became his. . . . . And I was grieved and troubled. . . . . " She cleared her voice, and waited a moment, as if to gather breath. "And then, between jealousy and distraction, I married him!" she whispered, with desperate impetuosity.

Gabriel made no reply.

"He was not to blame, for it was perfectly true about—about his seeing somebody else," she quickly added. "And now I don't wish for a single remark from you upon the subject—indeed I forbid it. I only wanted you to know that misunderstood bit of my history before a time comes when you could never know it.—You want some more sheaves?"

She went down the ladder, and the work proceeded. Gabriel soon perceived a languor in the movements of his mistress up and down, and he said to her gently as a mother,

"I think you had better go indoors now, you are tired. I can finish the rest alone. If the wind does not change the rain is likely to keep off."

"If I am useless I will go," said Bathsheba, in a flagging cadence. "But oh, if your life should be lost!"

"You are not useless; but I would rather not tire you longer. You have done well."

"And you better!" she said, gratefully. "Thank you for your devotion, a thousand times, Gabriel! Good-night—I know you are doing your very best for me."

She diminished in the gloom, and vanished, and he heard the latch of the gate fall as she passed through. He worked in a reverie now, musing upon her story, and upon the contradictoriness of that feminine heart which had caused her to speak more warmly to him to-night than she ever had done whilst unmarried and free to speak as warmly as she chose.

He was disturbed in his meditation by a grating noise from the coach-house. It was the vane on the roof turning round, and this change in the wind was the signal for a disastrous rain.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

RAIN: ONE SOLITARY MEETS ANOTHER.

It was now five o'clock, and the dawn was promising to break in hues of drab and ash.

The air changed its temperature and stirred itself more vigorously. Cool elastic breezes coursed in transparent eddies round Oak's face. The wind shifted yet a point or two and blew stronger. In ten minutes every wind of heaven seemed to be roaming at large. Some of the thatching on the wheat-stacks was now whirled fantastically aloft, and had to be replaced and weighted with some rails that lay near at hand. This done, Oak slaved away again at the barley. A huge drop of rain smote his face, the wind snarled round every corner, the trees rocked to the bases of their trunks, and the twigs clashed in strife. Driving in spars at any point and on any system inch by inch he covered more and more safely from ruin this distracting impersonation of seven hundred pounds. The rain came on in earnest, and Oak soon felt the water to be tracking cold and clammy routes down his back. Ultimately he was reduced well-nigh to a homogeneous sop, and a decoction of his person trickled down and stood in a pool at the foot of the ladder. The rain stretched obliquely through the dull atmosphere in liquid spines, unbroken in continuity between their beginnings in the clouds and their points in him.

Oak suddenly remembered that eight months before this time he had been fighting against fire in the same spot as desperately as he was fighting against water now—and for a futile love of the same woman. As for her ——. But Oak was generous and true, and dismissed his reflections.

It was about seven o'clock in the dark leaden morning when Gabriel came down from the last stack, and thankfully exclaimed, "It is done!" He was drenched, weary, and sad; and yet not so sad as drenched and weary, for he was cheered by a sense of success in a good cause.

Faint sounds came from the barn, and he looked that way. Figures came singly and in pairs through the doors—all walking awkwardly, and abashed, save the foremost, who wore a red jacket, and advanced with his hands in his pockets, whistling. The others shambled after with a conscience-stricken air: the whole procession was not unlike Flaxman's group of the suitors tottering on towards the infernal regions under the conduct of Mercury. The gnarled shapes passed into the village, Troy their leader entering the farmhouse. Not a single one of them had turned his face to the ricks, or apparently bestowed one thought upon their condition. Soon Oak too went homeward, by a different route from theirs. In front of him against the wet glazed surface of the lane he saw a person walking yet more slowly than himself under an umbrella. The man turned and apparently started: he was Boldwood.

"How are you this morning, sir?" said Oak.

"Yes, it is a wet day.—O I am well, very well I thank you: quite well."

"I am glad to hear it, sir."

Boldwood seemed to awake to the present by degrees. "You look tired and ill, Oak," he said then, desultorily regarding his companion.

"I am tired. You look strangely altered, sir."

"I? Not a bit of it: I am well enough. What put that into your head?"

"I thought you didn't look quite so topping as you used to, that was all."

"Indeed, then you are mistaken," said Boldwood, shortly. "Nothing hurts me. My constitution is an iron one."

"I've been working hard to get our ricks covered, and was barely in time. Never had such a struggle in my life . . . Yours of course are safe, sir."

"O yes." Boldwood added after an interval of silence, "What did you ask, Oak?"

"Your ricks are all covered before this time."

"No."

"At any rate, the large ones upon the stone staddles?"

"They are not."

"Those under the hedge?"

"No. I forgot to tell the thatcher to set about it."

"Nor the little one by the stile?"

"Nor the little one by the stile. I overlooked the ricks this year.'

"Then not a tenth of your corn will come to measure, sir."

"Possibly not."

"Overlooked them," repeated Gabriel slowly to himself. It is difficult

to describe the intensely dramatic effect that announcement had upon Oak at such a moment. All the night he had been feeling that the neglect he was labouring to repair was abnormal and isolated—the only instance of the kind within the circuit of the country. Yet at this very time, within the same parish, a greater waste had been going on, uncomplained of and disregarded. A few months earlier Boldwood's forgetting his husbandry would have been as preposterous an idea as a sailor forgetting he was in a ship. Oak was just thinking that whatever he himself might have suffered from Bathsheba's marriage, here was a man who had suffered more, when Boldwood spoke in a changed voice—that of one who yearned to make a confidence and relieve his heart by an outpouring.

"Oak, you know as well as I that things have gone wrong with me lately. I may as well own it. I was going to get a little settled in life; but in some way my plan has come to nothing."

"I thought my mistress would have married you," said Gabriel, not knowing enough of the full depths of Boldwood's love to keep silence on the farmer's account, and determined not to evade discipline by doing so on his own. "However, it is so sometimes, and nothing happens that we expect," he added, with the repose of a man whom misfortune had inured rather than subdued.

"I dare say I am a joke about the parish," said Boldwood, as if the subject came irresistibly to his tongue, and with a miserable lightness meant to express his indifference.

"O no—I don't think that."

"—But the real truth of the matter is that there was not, as some fancy, any jilting on—her part. No engagement ever existed between me and Miss Everdene. People say so, but it is untrue: she never promised me!" Boldwood stood still now and turned his wild face to Oak. "O Gabriel," he continued, "I am weak and foolish, and I don't know what, and I can't fend off my miserable grief! . . . . I had some faint belief in the mercy of God till I lost that woman. Yes, he prepared a gourd to shade me, and like the prophet I thanked him and was glad. But the next day he prepared a worm to smite the gourd, and wither it; and I feel it is better to die than to live."

A silence followed. Boldwood aroused himself from the momentary mood of confidence into which he had drifted, and walked on again, resuming his usual reserve.

"No, Gabriel," he resumed with a carelessness which was like the smile on the countenance of a skull; "it was made more of by other people than ever it was by us. I do feel a little regret occasionally no woman ever had power over me for any length of time. Well, g morning. I can trust you not to mention to others what has p between us two here."

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SEPTEMBER 1874.

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SHE OPENED A GATE WITHIN WHICH WAS A HAYSTACK, UNDER THIS SHE SAT DOWN."

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1874.

Far from the Madding Crowd.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Coming Home: a Cry.

IN the turnpike-road, between Casterbridge and Weatherbury, and about a mile from the latter place, is one of those steep long ascents which pervade the highways of this undulating district. In returning from market it is usual for the farmers and other gig-gentry to alight at the bottom and walk up.

One Saturday evening in the month of October Bathsheba's vehicle was duly creeping up this incline. She was sitting listlessly in the second seat of the gig, whilst walking beside her in a farmer's marketing suit of unusually fashionable cut was an erect, well-made young man. Though on foot, he held the reins and whip, and occasionally aimed light cuts at the horse's ear with the end of the lash, as a recreation. This man was her husband, formerly Sergeant Troy, who, having bought his discharge with Bathsheba's money, was gradually transforming himself into a farmer

of a spirited and very modern school. People of unalterable ideas still insisted upon calling him "Sergeant" when they met him, which was in some degree owing to his having still retained the well-shaped moustache of his military days, and the soldierly bearing inseparable from his form.

"Yes, if it hadn't been for that wretched rain I should have cleared two hundred as easy as looking, my love," he was saying. "Don't you see, it altered all the chances? To speak like a book I once read, wet weather is the narrative, and fine days are the episodes, of our country's history; now, isn't that true?"

"But the time of year is come for changeable weather."

"Well, yes. The fact is, these autumn races are the ruin of everybody. Never did I see such a day as 'twas! 'Tis a wild open place, not far from the sands, and a drab sea rolled in towards us like liquid misery. Wind and rain—good Lord! Dark? Why, 'twas as black as my hat before the last race was run. 'Twas five o'clock, and you couldn't see the horses till they were almost in, leave alone colours. The ground was as heavy as lead, and all judgment from a fellow's experience went for nothing. Horses, riders, people, were all blown about like ships at sea. Three booths were blown over, and the wretched folk inside crawled out upon their hands and knees; and in the next field were as many as a dozen hats at one time. Aye, Pimpernel regularly stuck fast when about sixty yards off, and when I saw Policy stepping on, it did knock my heart against the lining of my ribs, I assure you, my love!"

"And you mean, Frank," said Bathsheba, sadly—her voice was painfully lowered from the fulness and vivacity of the previous summer—"that you have lost more than a hundred pounds in a month by this dreadful horseracing? Oh, Frank, it is cruel; it is foolish of you to take away my money so. We shall have to leave the farm; that will be the end of it!"

"Humbug about cruel. Now, there 'tis again—turn on the waterworks; that's just like you."

"But you'll promise me not to go to Budmouth races next week, won't you?" she implored. Bathsheba was at the full depth for tears, but she maintained a dry eye.

"I don't see why I should; in fact, if it turns out to be a fine day, I was thinking of taking you."

"Never, never! I'll go a hundred miles the other way first. I hate the sound of the very word!"

"But the question of going to see the race or staying at home has very little to do with the matter. Bets are all booked safely enough before the race begins, you may depend. Whether it is a bad race for me or a good one, will have very little to do with our going there next Monday."

"But you don't mean to say that you have risked anything on this one too!" she exclaimed, with an agonised look.

"There now, don't you be a little fool. Wait till you are told. Why, Bathsheba, you've lost all the pluck and sauciness you formerly had, and

upon my life if I had known what a chicken-hearted creature you were under all your boldness, I'd never have—I know what."

A flash of indignation might have been seen in Bathsheba's dark eyes as she looked resolutely ahead after this reply. They moved on without further speech, some early-withered leaves from the beech trees which hooded the road at this spot occasionally spinning downward across their path to the earth.

A woman appeared on the brow of the hill. The ridge was so abrupt that she was very near the husband and wife before she became visible. Troy had turned towards the gig to remount, and whilst putting his foot on the step the woman passed behind him.

Though the overshadowing trees and the approach of eventide enveloped them in gloom, Bathsheba could see plainly enough to discern the extreme poverty of the woman's garb, and the sadness of her face.

"Please, sir, do you know at what time Casterbridge Union-house closes at night?"

The woman said these words to Troy over his shoulder.

Troy started visibly at the sound of the voice; yet he seemed to recover presence of mind sufficient to prevent himself from giving way to his impulse to suddenly turn and face her. He said slowly—

"I don't know."

The woman, on hearing him speak, quickly looked up, examined the side of his face, and recognised the soldier under the yeoman's garb. Her face was drawn into an expression which had gladness and agony both among its elements. She uttered a hysterical cry, and fell down.

"Oh, poor thing!" exclaimed Bathsheba, instantly preparing to alight.

"Stay where you are, and attend to the horse!" said Troy, peremptorily, throwing her the reins and the whip. "Walk the horse to the top: I'll see to the woman."

"But I ——"

"Do you hear? Clk—Poppet!"

The horse, gig, and Bathsheba moved on.

"How on earth did you come here? I thought you were miles away, or dead! Why didn't you write to me?" said Troy to the woman, in a strangely gentle, yet hurried voice, as he lifted her up.

"I feared to."

"Have you any money?"

"None."

"Good Heaven—I wish I had more to give you! Here's—wretched—the merest trifle. It is every farthing I have left. I have none but what my wife gives me, you know, and I can't ask her now."

The woman made no answer.

"I have only another moment," continued Troy; "and now listen. Where are you going to-night? Casterbridge Union?"

"Yes; I thought to go there."

"You shan't go there: yet, wait. Yes, perhaps for to-night; I can

do nothing better—worse luck. Sleep there to-night, and stay there to-morrow. Monday is the first free day I have; and on Monday morning at ten exactly meet me on Casterbridge Bridge. I'll bring all the money I can muster. You shan't want—I'll see that, Fanny; then I'll get you a lodging somewhere. Good-bye till then. I am a brute—but good-bye!"

After advancing the distance which completed the ascent of the hill, Bathsheba turned her head. The woman was upon her feet, and Bathsheba saw her withdrawing from Troy, and going feebly down the hill. Troy then came on towards his wife, stepped into the gig, took the reins from her hand, and without making any observation whipped the horse into a trot. He was rather pale.

"Do you know who that woman was?" said Bathsheba, looking searchingly into his face.

"I do," he said, looking boldly back into hers.

"I thought you did," said she, with angry hauteur, and still regarding him. "Who is she?"

He suddenly seemed to think that frankness would benefit neither of the women.

"Nothing to either of us," he said. "I know her by sight."

"What is her name?"

"How should I know her name?"

"I think you do."

"Think if you will and be ——." The sentence was completed by a smart cut of the whip round Poppet's flank, which caused the animal to start forward at a wild pace. No more was said.

CHAPTER XL.

On Casterbridge Highway.

For a considerable time the woman walked on. Her steps became feebler, and she strained her eyes to look afar upon the naked road, now indistinct amid the penumbræ of night. At length her onward walk dwindled to the merest totter, and she opened a gate within which was a haystack. Underneath this she sat down and presently slept.

When the woman awoke it was to find herself in the depths of a moonless and starless night. A heavy unbroken crust of cloud stretched across the sky, shutting out every speck of heaven; and a distant halo which hung over the town of Casterbridge was visible against the black concave, the luminosity appearing the brighter by its great contrast with the circumscribing darkness. Towards this weak, soft glow the woman turned her eyes.

"If I could only get there!" she said. "Meet him the day after to-morrow: God help me! Perhaps I shall be in my grave before then."

A clock from the far depths of shadow struck the hour, one, in

a small, attenuated tone. After midnight the voice of a clock seems to lose in breadth as much as in length, and to diminish its sonorousness to a thin falsetto.

Afterwards a light—two lights—arose from the remote shade, and grew larger. A carriage rolled along the road, and passed the gate. It probably contained some late diners-out. The beams from one lamp shone for a moment upon the crouching woman, and threw her face into vivid relief. The face was young in the groundwork, old in the finish; the general contours were flexuous and childlike, but the finer lineaments had begun to be sharp and thin.

The pedestrian stood up, apparently with a revived determination, and looked around. The road appeared to be familiar to her, and she carefully scanned the fence as she slowly walked along. Presently there became visible a dim white shape; it was a milestone. She drew her fingers across its face to feel the marks.

"Three!" she said.

She leant against the stone as a means of rest for a short interval, then bestirred herself, and again pursued her way. For a lengthy distance she bore up bravely, afterwards flagging as before. This was beside a lone hazel copse, wherein heaps of white chips strewn upon the leafy ground showed that woodmen had been faggoting and making hurdles during the day. Now there was not a rustle, not a breeze, not the faintest clash of twigs to keep her company. The woman looked over the gate, opened it, and went in. Close to the entrance stood a row of faggots, bound and unbound, together with stakes of all sizes.

For a few seconds the wayfarer stood with that tense stillness which signifies itself to be not the end, but merely the suspension, of a previous motion. Her attitude was that of a person who listens, either to the external world of sound, or to the imagined discourse of thought. A close criticism might have detected signs proving that she was intent on the latter alternative. Moreover, as was shown by what followed, she was oddly exercising the faculty of invention upon the speciality of the clever Jacquet Droz, the designer of automatic substitutes for human limbs.

By the aid of the Casterbridge aurora, and by feeling with her hands, the woman selected two sticks from the heaps. These sticks were nearly straight to the height of three or four feet, where each branched into a fork like the letter Y. She sat down, snapped off the small upper twigs, and carried the remainder with her into the road. She placed one of these forks under each arm as a crutch, tested them, timidly threw her whole weight upon them—so little that it was—and swung herself forward. The girl had made for herself a material aid.

The crutches answered well. The pat of her feet, and the tap of her sticks upon the highway, were all the sounds that came from the traveller now. She had passed a second milestone by a good long distance, and began to look wistfully towards the bank as if calculating upon another milestone soon. The crutches, though so very useful, had their limits

of power. Mechanism only transmutes labour, being powerless to abstract it, and the original quantum of exertion was not cleared away; it was thrown into the body and arms. She was exhausted, and each swing forward became fainter. At last she swayed sideways, and fell.

Here she lay, a shapeless heap, for ten minutes and more. The morning wind began to boom dully over the flats, and to move afresh dead leaves which had lain still since yesterday. The woman desperately turned round upon her knees, and next rose to her feet. Steadying herself by the help of one crutch she essayed a step, then another, then a third, using the crutches now as walking-sticks only. Thus she progressed till the beginning of a long railed fence came into view. She staggered across to the first post, clung to it, and looked around. Another milestone was on the opposite side of the road.

The Casterbridge lights were now individually visible. It was getting towards morning, and vehicles might be hoped for if not expected soon. She listened. There was not a sound of life save that acme and sublimation of all dismal sounds, the bark of a fox, its three hollow notes being rendered at intervals of a minute with the precision of a funeral bell.

"One mile more," the woman murmured. "No, less," she added, after a pause. "The mile is to the Town Hall, and my resting-place is on this side Casterbridge. Three-quarters of a mile, and there I am!" After an interval she again spoke. "Five or six steps to a yard—six perhaps. I have to go twelve hundred yards. A hundred times six, six hundred. Twelve times that. O pity me, Lord!"

Holding to the rails she advanced, thrusting one hand forward upon the rail, then the other, then leaning over it whilst she dragged her feet on beneath.

This woman was not given to soliloquy; but extremity of feeling lessens the individuality of the weak, as it increases that of the strong. She said again in the same tone, "I'll believe that the end lies five posts forward, and no further, and so get strength to pass them."

This was a practical application of the principle that a half feigned and factitious faith is better than no faith at all.

She passed five posts, and held on to the fifth.

"I'll pass five more by believing my longed-for spot is at the next fifth. I can do it."

She passed five more.

"It lies only five further."

She passed five more.

"But it is five further."

She passed them.

"The end of these railings is the end of my journey," she said, when the end was in view.

She crawled to the end. During the effort each breath of the woman went into the air as if never to return again.

"Now for the truth of the matter," she said, sitting down. "The

truth is, that I have less than half a mile." Self-beguilement with what she had known all the time to be false had given her strength to come a quarter of a mile that she would have been powerless to face in the lump. The artifice showed that the woman, by some mysterious intuition, had grasped the paradoxical truth that blindness may operate more vigorously than prescience, and the short-sighted effect more than the far-seeing; that limitation, and not comprehensiveness, is needed for striking a blow.

The half-mile stood now before the sick and weary woman like a stolid Juggernaut. It was an impassive King of her world. The road here ran across a level plateau with only a bank on either side. She surveyed the wide space, the lights, herself, sighed, and lay down on the bank.

Never was ingenuity exercised so sorely as the traveller here exercised hers. Every conceivable aid, method, stratagem, mechanism, by which these last desperate eight hundred yards could be overpassed by a human being unperceived, was revolved in her busy brain, and dismissed as impracticable. She thought of sticks, wheels, crawling—she even thought of rolling. But the exertion demanded by either of these latter two was greater than to walk erect. The faculty of contrivance was worn out. Hopelessness had come at last.

"No further!" she whispered, and closed her eyes.

From the stripe of shadow on the opposite side of the way a portion of shade seemed to detach itself and move into isolation upon the pale white of the road. It glided noiselessly towards the recumbent woman.

She became conscious of something touching her hand; it was softness and it was warmth. She opened her eyes, and the substance touched her face. A dog was licking her cheek.

He was a huge, heavy, and quiet creature, standing darkly against the low horizon, and at least two feet higher than the present position of her eyes. Whether Newfoundland, mastiff, bloodhound, or what not, it was impossible to say. He seemed to be of too strange and mysterious a nature to belong to any variety among those of popular nomenclature. Being thus assignable to no breed he was the ideal embodiment of canine greatness—a generalisation from what was common to all. Night, in its sad, solemn, and benevolent aspect, apart from its stealthy and cruel side, was personified in this form. Darkness endows the small and ordinary ones among mankind with poetical power, and even the suffering woman threw her idea into figure.

In her reclining position she looked up to him just as in earlier times she had, when standing, looked up to a man. The animal, who was as homeless as she, respectfully withdrew a step or two when the woman moved, and, seeing that she did not repulse him, he licked her hand again.

A thought moved within her like lightning. "Perhaps I can make use of him—I might do it then!"

She pointed in the direction of Casterbridge, and the dog seemed to misunderstand: he trotted on. Then, finding she could not follow, he came back and whined.

The ultimate and saddest singularity of woman's effort and invention was reached when, with a quickened breathing, she rose to a stooping posture, and, resting her two little arms upon the shoulders of the dog, leant firmly thereon, and murmured stimulating words. Whilst she sorrowed in her heart she cheered with her voice, and what was stranger than that the strong should need encouragement from the weak was that cheerfulness should be so well simulated by such utter dejection. Her friend moved forward slowly, and she with small mincing steps moved forward beside him, half her weight being thrown upon the animal. Sometimes she sank as she had sunk from walking erect, from the crutches, from the rails. The dog, who now thoroughly understood her desire and her incapacity, was frantic in his distress on these occasions; he would tug at her dress and run forward. She always called him back, and it was now to be observed that the woman listened for human sounds only to avoid them. It was evident that she had an object in keeping her presence on the road and her forlorn state unknown.

Their progress was necessarily very slow. They reached the brow of the hill, and the Casterbridge lamps lay beneath them like fallen Pleiads as they walked down the incline. Thus the distance was passed, and the goal was reached. On this much desired spot outside the town rose a picturesque building. Originally it had been a mere case to hold people. The shell had been so thin, so devoid of excrescence, and so closely drawn over the accommodation granted that the grim character of what was beneath showed through it, as the shape of a body is visible under a winding sheet.

Then Nature, as if offended, lent a hand. Masses of ivy grew up, completely covering the walls, till the place looked like an abbey; and it was discovered that the view from the front, over the Casterbridge chimneys, was one of the most magnificent in the county. A neighbouring earl once said that he would give up a year's rental to have at his own door the view enjoyed by the inmates from theirs—and very probably the inmates would have given up the view for his year's rental.

This green edifice consisted of a central mass and two wings, whereon stood as sentinels a few slim chimneys, now gurgling sorrowfully to the slow wind. In the middle was a gate, and by the gate a bell-pull formed of a hanging wire. The woman raised herself as high as possible upon her knees, and could just reach the handle. She moved it and fell forwards in a bowed attitude, her face upon her bosom.

It was getting on towards six o'clock, and sounds of movement were to be heard inside the building which was the haven of rest to this wearied soul. A little door in the large one was opened, and a man appeared inside. He discerned the panting heap of clothes, went back for a light, and came again. He entered a second time and returned with two women.

These lifted the prostrate figure and assisted her in through the doorway. The man then closed the door.

"How did she get here?" said one of the women.

"The Lord knows," said the other.

"There is a dog outside," murmured the overcome traveller. "Where is he gone? He helped me."

"I stoned him away," said the man.

The little procession then moved forward—the man in front bearing the light, the two bony women next, supporting between them the small and supple one. Thus they entered the door and disappeared.

CHAPTER XLI.

SUSPICION: FANNY IS SENT FOR.

BATHSHEBA said very little to her husband all that evening of their return from market, and he was not disposed to say much to her. He exhibited the unpleasant combination of a restless condition with a silent tongue. The next day, which was Sunday, passed nearly in the same manner as regarded their taciturnity, Bathsheba going to church both morning and afternoon. This was the day before the Budmouth races. In the evening Troy said suddenly,

"Bathsheba, could you let me have twenty pounds?"

Her countenance instantly sank. "Twenty pounds?" she said.

"The fact is, I want it badly." The anxiety upon Troy's face was unusual and very marked. It was a culmination of the mood he had been in all the day.

"Ah! for those races to-morrow."

Troy for the moment made no reply. Her mistake had its advantages to a man who shrank from having his mind inspected as he did now. "Well, suppose I do want it for races?" he said, at last.

"Oh, Frank!" Bathsheba replied, and there was such a volume of entreaty in the words. "Only such a few weeks ago you said that I was far sweeter than all your other pleasures put together, and that you would give them all up for me; and now, won't you give up this one, which is more a worry than a pleasure? Do, Frank. Come, let me fascinate you by all I can do—by pretty words and pretty looks, and everything I can think of—to stay at home. Say yes to your wife—say yes!"

The tenderest and softest phases of Bathsheba's nature were prominent now—advanced impulsively for his acceptance, without any of the disguises and defences which the wariness of her character when she was cool too frequently threw over them. Few men could have resisted the arch yet dignified entreaty of the beautiful face, thrown a little back and sideways in the well-known attitude that expresses more than the words it accompanies, and which seems to have been designed for these special occasions. Had the woman not been his wife Troy would have succumbed instantly; as it was, he thought he would not deceive her longer.

"The money is not wanted for racing debts at all," he said.

"What is it for?" she asked. "You worry me a great deal by these mysterious responsibilities, Frank."

Troy hesitated. He did not now love her enough to allow himself to be carried too far by her ways. Yet it was necessary to be civil. "You wrong me by such a suspicious manner," he said. "Such strait-waistcoating as you treat me to is not becoming in you at so early a date."

"I think that I have a right to grumble a little if I pay," she said, with features between a smile and a pout.

"Exactly; and, the former being done, suppose we proceed to the latter. Bathsheba, fun is all very well, but don't go too far, or you may have cause to regret something."

She reddened. "I do that already," she said, quickly.

"What do you regret?"

"That my romance has come to an end."

"All romances end at marriage."

"I wish you wouldn't talk like that. You grieve me to my soul by being smart at my expense."

"You are dull enough at mine. I believe you hate me."

"Not you—only your vices. I do hate them."

"'Twould be much more becoming if you set yourself to cure them. Come, let's strike a balance with the twenty pounds, and be friends."

She gave a sigh of resignation. "I have about that sum here for household expenses. If you must have it, take it."

"Very good. Thank you. I expect I shall have gone away before you are in to breakfast to-morrow."

"And must you go? Ah! there was a time, Frank, when it would have taken a good many promises to other people to drag you away from me. You used to call me darling, then. But it doesn't matter to you how my days are passed now."

"I must go, in spite of sentiment." Troy, as he spoke, looked at his watch, and, apparently actuated by *non lucendo* principles, opened the case at the back, revealing, snugly stowed within it, a small coil of hair.

Bathsheba's eyes had been accidentally lifted at that moment, and she saw the action, and saw the hair. She flushed in pain and surprise, and some words escaped her before she had thought whether or not it was wise to utter them. "A woman's curl of hair!" she said. "Oh, Frank, whose is that?"

Troy had instantly closed his watch. He carelessly replied, as one who cloaked some feelings that the sight had stirred. "Why, yours, of course. Whose should it be? I had quite forgotten that I had it."

"What a dreadful fib, Frank!"

"I tell you I had forgotten it!" he said, loudly.

"I don't mean that—it was yellow hair."

"Nonsense."

"That's insulting me. I know it was yellow. Now whose was it? I want to know."

"Very well—I'll tell you, so make no more ado. It is the hair of a young woman I was going to marry before I knew you."

"You ought to tell me her name, then."

"I cannot do that."

"Is she married yet?"

"No."

"Is she alive?"

"Yes."

"Is she pretty?"

"Yes."

"It is wonderful how she can be, poor thing, under such an awful affliction."

"Affliction—what affliction?" he enquired, quickly.

"Having hair of that dreadful colour."

"Oh—ho—I like that!" said Troy, recovering himself. "Why, her hair has been admired by everybody who has seen her since she has worn it loose, which has not been long. It is beautiful hair. People used to turn their heads to look at it, poor girl!"

"Pooh! that's nothing—that's nothing!" she exclaimed, in incipient accents of pique. "If I cared for your love as much as I used to I could say people had turned to look at mine."

"Bathsheba, don't be so fitful and jealous. You knew what married life would be like, and shouldn't have entered it if you feared these contingencies."

Troy had by this time driven her to bitterness: her heart was big in her throat, and the ducts to her eyes were painfully full. Ashamed as she was to show emotion, at last she burst out:—

"This is all I get for loving you so well! Ah! when I married you your life was dearer to me than my own. I would have died for you—how truly I can say that I would have died for you! And now you sneer at my foolishness in marrying you. Oh! is it kind to me to throw my mistake in my face? Whatever opinion you may have of my wisdom, you should not tell me of it so mercilessly, now that I am in your power."

"I can't help how things fall out," said Troy; "upon my heart, women will be the death of me!"

"Well, you shouldn't keep people's hair. You'll burn it, won't you, Frank?"

Frank went on as if he had not heard her. "There are considerations even before my consideration for you; reparation to be made—ties you know nothing of. If you repent of marrying, so do I."

Trembling now, she put her hand upon his arm, saying, in mingled tones of wretchedness and coaxing, "I only repent it if you don't love me better than any woman in the world. I don't otherwise, Frank. You don't repent because you already love somebody better than you love me, do you?"

"I don't know. Why do you say that?"

"You won't burn that curl. You like the woman who owns that pretty hair—yes; it is pretty—more beautiful than my miserable black mane! Well, it is no use; I can't help being ugly. You must like her best, if you will!"

"Until to-day, when I took it from a drawer, I have never looked upon that bit of hair for several months—that I am ready to swear."

"But just now you said 'ties;' and then, that woman we met?"

"'Twas the meeting with her that reminded me of the hair."

"Is it hers, then?"

"Yes. There, now that you have wormed it out of me, I hope you are content."

"And what are the ties?"

"Oh! that meant nothing—a mere jest."

"A mere jest!" she said, in mournful astonishment. "Can you jest when I am so wretchedly in earnest? Tell me the truth, Frank. I am not a fool, you know, although I am a woman, and have my woman's moments. Come! treat me fairly," she said, looking honestly and fearlessly into his face. "I don't want much; bare justice—that's all. Ah! once I felt I could be content with nothing less than the highest homage from the husband I should choose. Now, anything short of cruelty will content me. Yes! the independent and spirited Bathsheba is come to this!"

"For Heaven's sake don't be so desperate!" Troy said, snappishly, rising as he did so, and leaving the room.

Directly he had gone, Bathsheba burst into great sobs—dry-eyed sobs, which cut as they came, without any softening by tears. But she determined to repress all evidences of feeling. She was conquered; but she would never own it as long as she lived. Her pride was indeed brought low by despairing discoveries of her spoliation by marriage with a less pure nature than her own. She chafed to and fro in rebelliousness, like a caged leopard; her whole soul was in arms, and the blood fired her face. Until she had met Troy, Bathsheba had been proud of her position as a woman; it had been a glory to her to know that her lips had been touched by no man's on earth—that her waist had never been encircled by a lover's arm. She hated herself now. In those earlier days she had always nourished a secret contempt for girls who were the slaves of the first good-looking young fellow who should choose to salute them. She had never taken kindly to the idea of marriage in the abstract as did the majority of women she saw about her. In the turmoil of her anxiety for her lover she had agreed to marry him; but the perception that had accompanied her happiest hours on this account was rather that of self-sacrifice than of promotion and honour. Although she scarcely knew the divinity's name, Diana was the goddess whom Bathsheba instinctively adored. That she had never, by look, word or sign, encouraged a man to approach her—that she had felt herself sufficient to herself, and had in the independence of her girlish heart fancied there was a certain degradation in renouncing the simplicity of a maiden existence to become the

humbler half of an indifferent matrimonial whole—were facts now bitterly remembered. Oh, if she had never stooped to folly of this kind, respectable as it was, and could only stand again, as she had stood on the hill at Norcombe, and dare Troy or any other man to pollute a hair of her head by his interference!

The next morning she rose earlier than usual, and had the horse saddled for her ride round the farm in the customary way. When she came in at half-past eight—their usual hour for breakfasting—she was informed that her husband had risen, taken his breakfast, and driven off to Casterbridge with the gig and Poppet.

After breakfast she was cool and collected—quite herself, in fact—and she rambled to the gate, intending to walk to another quarter of the farm, which she still personally superintended as well as her duties in the house would permit, continually, however, finding herself preceded in forethought by Gabriel Oak, for whom she began to entertain the genuine friendship of a sister. Of course, she sometimes thought of him in the light of an old lover, and had momentary imaginings of what life with him as a husband would have been like; also of life with Boldwood under the same conditions. But Bathsheba, though she could feel, was not much given to futile dreaming, and her musings under this head were short and entirely confined to the times when Troy's neglect was more than ordinarily evident.

She saw coming up the hill a man like Mr. Boldwood. It was Mr. Boldwood. Bathsheba blushed painfully, and watched. The farmer stopped when still a long way off, and held up his hand to Gabriel Oak, who was in another part of the field. The two men then approached each other and seemed to engage in earnest conversation.

Thus they continued for a long time. Joseph Poorgrass now passed near them, wheeling a barrow of apples up the hill to Bathsheba's residence. Boldwood and Gabriel called to him, spoke to him for a few minutes, and then all three parted, Joseph immediately coming up the hill with his barrow.

Bathsheba, who had seen this pantomime with some surprise, experienced great relief when Boldwood turned back again. "Well, what's the message, Joseph?" she said.

He set down his barrow, and, putting upon himself the refined aspect that a conversation with a lady required, spoke to Bathsheba over the gate.

"You'll never see Fanny Robin no more—use nor principal—ma'am."

"Why?"

"Because she's dead in the Union."

"Fanny dead—never!"

"Yes, ma'am."

"What did she die from?"

"I don't know for certain; but I should be inclined to think it was from general neshness of constitution. She was such a limber maid that 'a could stand no hardship, even when I knowed her, and 'a went like a

candle-snoff, so 'tis said. She was took bad in the morning, and, being quite feeble and worn out, she died in the afternoon. She belongs by law to our parish; and Mr. Boldwood is going to send a waggon this afternoon to fetch her home here and bury her."

"Indeed I shall not let Mr. Boldwood do any such thing—I shall do it. Fanny was my uncle's servant, and, although I only knew her for a couple of days, she belongs to me. How very, very sad this is!—the idea of Fanny being in a workhouse." Bathsheba had begun to know what suffering was, and she spoke with real feeling . . . "Send across to Mr. Boldwood's, and say that Mrs. Troy will take upon herself the duty of fetching an old servant of the family . . . We ought not to put her in a waggon; we'll get a hearse."

"There will hardly be time ma'am, will there?"

"Perhaps not," she said, musingly. "When did you say we must be at the door—three o'clock?"

"Three o'clock this afternoon ma'am, so to speak it."

"Very well—you go with it. A pretty waggon is better than an ugly hearse, after all. Joseph, have the new spring waggon with the blue body and red wheels, and wash it very clean. And, Joseph."

"Yes ma'am."

"Carry with you some evergreens and flowers to put upon her coffin—indeed, gather a great many, and completely bury her in them. Get some boughs of laurustinus, and variegated box, and yew, and boy's-love; ay, and some bunches of chrysanthemum. And let old Pleasant draw her, because she knew him so well."

"I will ma'am. I ought to have said that the Union, in the form of four labouring men, will meet me when I gets to our churchyard gate, and take her and bury her according to the rites of the Board of Guardians, as by law ordained."

"Dear me—Casterbridge Union—and is Fanny come to this!" said Bathsheba, musing. "I wish I had known of it sooner. I thought she was far away. How long has she lived there?"

"On'y been there a day or two."

"Oh!—then she has not been staying there as a regular inmate?"

"No. She's been picking up a living at seampstering in Melchester for several months, at the house of a very respectable widow-woman who takes in work of that sort. She only got handy the Union-house on Sunday morning 'a b'lieve, and 'tis supposed here and there that she had traipsed every step of the way from Melchester. Why she left her place I can't say, for I don't know; and as to a lie, why, I wouldn't tell it. That's the short of the story ma'am."

"Ah-h!"

No gem ever flashed from a rosy ray to a white one more rapidly than changed the young wife's countenance whilst this word came from her in a long drawn breath. "Did she walk along our turnpike-road?" she said, in a suddenly restless and eager voice.

"I believe she did . . . Ma'am, shall I call Liddy? You baint well, ma'am, surely? You look like a lily—so pale and fainty!"

"No; don't call her; it is nothing. When did she pass Weatherbury?"

"Last Saturday night."

"That will do, Joseph; now you may go."

"Certainly, ma'am."

"Joseph, come hither a moment. What was the colour of Fanny Robin's hair?"

"Really mistress, now that 'tis put to me so judge-and-jury-like, I can't call to mind, if ye'll believe me."

"Never mind; go on and do what I told you. Stop—well no, go on."

She turned herself away from him, that he might no longer notice the mood which had set its sign so visibly upon her, and went indoors with a distressing sense of faintness and a beating brow. About an hour after she heard the noise of the waggon and went out, still with a painful consciousness of her bewildered and troubled look. Joseph, dressed in his best suit of clothes, was putting in the horse to start. The shrubs and flowers were all piled in the waggon, as she had directed. Bathsheba hardly saw them now.

"Whose sweetheart did you say, Joseph?"

"I don't know, ma'am."

"Are you quite sure?"

"Yes, ma'am, quite sure."

"Sure of what?"

"I am sure that all I know is that she arrived in the morning and died in the evening without further parley. What Oak and Mr. Boldwood told me was only these few words. 'Little Fanny Robin is dead, Joseph,' Gabriel said, looking in my face in his steady old way. I was very sorry, and I said, 'Ah!—and how did she come to die?' 'Well, she's dead in Casterbridge Union,' he said; 'and perhaps 'tisn't much matter about how she came to die. She reached the Union early Sunday morning, and died in the afternoon—that's clear enough.' Then I asked what she'd been doing lately, and Mr. Boldwood turned round to me then, and left off spitting a thistle with the end of his stick. He told me about her having lived by seampstering in Melchester, as I mentioned to you, and that she walked therefrom at the end of last week, passing near here Saturday night in the dusk. They then said I had better just name a hent of her death to you, and away they went. Her death might have been brought on by biding in the night wind, you know, ma'am; for people used to say she'd go off in a decline: she used to cough a good deal in winter time. However 'tisn't much odds to us about that now, for 'tis all over."

"Have you heard a different story at all?" She looked at him so intently that Joseph's eyes quailed.

"Not a word, mistress, I assure you," he said. "Hardly anybody in the parish knows the news yet."

"I wonder why Gabriel didn't bring the message to me himself. He mostly makes a point of seeing me upon the most trifling errand." These words were merely murmured, and she was looking upon the ground.

"Perhaps he was busy, ma'am," Joseph suggested. "And sometimes he seems to suffer from things upon his mind connected with the time when he was better off than 'a is now. 'A's rather a curious item, but a very understanding shepherd, and learned in books."

"Did anything seem upon his mind whilst he was speaking to you about this?"

"I cannot but say that there did, ma'am. He was terrible down, and so was Farmer Boldwood."

"Thank you, Joseph. That will do. Go on now, or you'll be late."

Bathsheba, still unhappy, went indoors again. In the course of the afternoon she said to Liddy, who had been informed of the occurrence, "What was the colour of poor Fanny Robin's hair? Do you know? I cannot recollect—I only saw her for a day or two."

"It was light, ma'am; but she wore it rather short, and packed away under her cap, so that you would hardly notice it. But I have seen her let it down when she was going to bed, and it looked beautiful then. Real golden hair."

"Her young man was a soldier, was he not?"

"Yes. In the same regiment as Mr. Troy. He says he knew him very well."

"What, Mr. Troy says so? How came he to say that?"

"One day I just named it to him, and asked him if he knew Fanny's young man. He said, 'Oh yes, he knew the young man as well as he knew himself, and that there wasn't a man in the regiment he liked better.'"

"Ah! Said that, did he?"

"Yes, and he said there was a strong likeness between himself and the other young man, so that sometimes people mistook them——"

"Liddy, for Heaven's sake stop your talking!" said Bathsheba, with the nervous petulance that comes from worrying perceptions.

CHAPTER XLII.

JOSEPH AND HIS BURDEN: "BUCK'S HEAD."

A WALL bounded the site of Casterbridge Union-house, except along a portion of the end. Here a high gable stood prominent, and it was covered like the front with a mat of ivy. In this gable was no window, chimney, ornament, or protuberance of any kind. The single feature appertaining to it, beyond the expanse of dark green leaves, was a small door.

The situation of the door was peculiar. The sill was three or four feet above the ground, and for a moment one was at a loss for an explanation of this exceptional altitude, till ruts immediately beneath suggested that the door was used solely for the passage of articles and persons to and from the level of a vehicle standing on the outside. Upon the whole, the door seemed to advertise itself as a species of Traitors' Gate translated to another element. That entry and exit hereby was only at rare intervals became apparent on noting that tufts of grass were allowed to flourish undisturbed in the chinks of the sill.

As the clock from the tower of St. George's Church pointed at three minutes to three, a blue spring waggon, picked out with red, and containing boughs and flowers, turned from the high road and halted on this side of the building. Whilst the chimes were yet stammering out a shattered form of "Malbrook," Joseph Poorgrass rang the bell, and received directions to back his waggon against the high door under the gable. The door then opened, and a plain elm coffin was slowly thrust forth, and laid by two men in fustian along the middle of the vehicle.

One of the men then stepped up beside it, took from his pocket a lump of chalk, and wrote upon the cover the name and a few other words in a large scrawling hand. (We believe that they do these things more tenderly now, and provide a plate.) He covered the whole with a black cloth, threadbare, but decent, the tail-board of the waggon was returned to its place, one of the men handed a certificate of registry to Poorgrass, and both entered the door, closing it behind them. Their connection with her, short as it had been, was over for ever.

Joseph then placed the flowers as enjoined, and the evergreens around the flowers, till it was difficult to divine what the waggon contained; he smacked his whip, and the rather pleasing funeral car crept up the hill, and along the road to Weatherbury.

The afternoon drew on apace, and, looking to the left towards the sea as he walked beside the horse, Poorgrass saw strange clouds and scrolls of mist rolling over the high hills which girt the landscape in that quarter. They came in yet greater volumes, and indolently crept across the intervening valleys, and around the withered papery flags of the sloughs and river brinks. Then their dank spongy forms closed in upon the sky. It was a sudden overgrowth of atmospheric fungi which had their roots in the neighbouring sea, and by the time that horse, man, and corpse entered Yalbury Great Wood, these silent workings of an invisible hand had reached them, and they were completely enveloped. It was the first arrival of the autumn fogs, and the first fog of the series.

The air was as an eye suddenly struck blind. The waggon and its load rolled no longer on the horizontal division between clearness and opacity. They were imbedded in an elastic body of a monotonous pallor throughout. There was no perceptible motion in the air, not a visible drop of water fell upon a leaf of the beeches, birches, and firs composing the wood on either side. The trees stood in an attitude of intentness, as

if they waited longingly for a wind to come and rock them. A startling quiet overhung all surrounding things—so completely, that the crunching of the waggon-wheels was as a great noise, and small rustles, which had never obtained a hearing except by night, were distinctly individualised.

Joseph Poorgrass looked round upon his sad burden as it loomed faintly through the flowering laurustinus, then at the unfathomable gloom amid the high trees on each hand, indistinct, shadowless, and spectre-like in their monochrome of grey. He felt anything but cheerful, and wished he had the company even of a child or dog. Stopping the horse, he listened. Not a footstep or wheel was audible anywhere around, and the dead silence was broken only by a heavy particle falling from a tree through the evergreens and alighting with a smart rap upon the coffin of poor Fanny. The fog had by this time saturated the trees, and this was the first dropping of water from the overbrimming leaves. The hollow echo of its fall reminded the waggoner painfully of the grim Leveller. Then hard by came down another drop, then two or three. Presently there was a continual tapping of these heavy drops upon the dead leaves, the road, and the travellers. The nearer boughs were beaded with the mist to the greyness of aged men, and the rusty-red leaves of the beeches were hung with similar drops, like diamonds on auburn hair.

Situated by the roadside in the midst of this wood was the old inn, called "Buck's Head." It was about a mile and a half from Weatherbury, and in the meridian times of stage-coach travelling had been the place where many coaches changed and kept their relays of horses. All the old stabling was now pulled down, and little remained besides the habitable inn itself, which, standing a little way back from the road, signified its existence to people far up and down the highway by a sign hanging from the horizontal bough of an elm on the opposite side of the way.

Travellers—for the variety *tourist* had hardly developed into a distinct species at this date—sometimes said in passing, when they cast their eyes up to the sign-bearing tree, that artists were fond of representing the sign-board hanging thus, but that they themselves had never before noticed so perfect an instance in actual working order. It was near this tree that the waggon was standing into which Gabriel Oak crept on his first journey to Weatherbury; but, owing to the darkness, the sign and the inn had been unobserved.

The manners of the inn were of the old-established type. Indeed, in the minds of its frequenters they existed as unalterable formulæ: *e.g.*—

> Rap with the bottom of your pint for more liquor.
> For tobacco, shout.
> In calling for the girl in waiting, say, "Maid!"
> Ditto for the landlady, "Old Soul!" &c. &c.

It was a relief to Joseph's heart when the friendly sign-board came in view, and, stopping his horse immediately beneath it, he proceeded to fulfil an intention made a long time before. His spirits were oozing out of him

quite. He turned the horse's head to the green bank, and entered the hostel for a mug of ale.

Going down into the kitchen of the inn, the floor of which was a step below the passage, which in its turn was a step below the road outside, what should Joseph see to gladden his eyes but two copper-coloured discs, in the form of the countenances of Mr. Jan Coggan and Mr. Mark Clark. These owners of the two most appreciative throats in the neighbourhood, on this side of respectability, were now sitting face to face over a three-legged circular table, having an iron rim to keep cups and pots from being accidentally elbowed off; they might have been said to resemble the setting sun and the full moon shining *vis-à-vis* across the globe.

"Why, 'tis neighbour Poorgrass!" said Mark Clark. "I'm sure your face don't praise your mistress's table, Joseph."

"I've had a very pale companion for the last five miles," said Joseph, indulging in a shudder toned down by resignation. "And to speak the truth, 'twas beginning to tell upon me. I assure ye I ha'n't seed the colour of victuals or drink since breakfast time this morning, and that was no more than a dew-bit afield."

"Then drink, Joseph, and don't restrain yourself!" said Coggan, handing him a hooped mug three-quarters full.

Joseph drank for a moderately long time, then for a longer time, saying, as he lowered the jug, "'Tis pretty drinking—very pretty drinking, and is more than cheerful on my melancholy errand, so to speak it."

"True, drink is a pleasant delight," said Jan, as one who repeated a truism so familiar to his brain that he hardly noticed its passage over his tongue; and, lifting the cup, Coggan tilted his head gradually backwards, with closed eyes, that his expectant soul might not be diverted for one instant from its bliss by irrelevant surroundings.

"Well, I must be on again," said Poorgrass. "Not but that I should like another nip with ye; but the country might lose confidence in me if I was seed here."

"Where be ye trading o't to-day then, Joseph?"

"Back to Weatherbury. I've got poor little Fanny Robin in my waggon outside, and I must be at the churchyard gates at a quarter to five with her."

"Ay—I've heard of it. And so she's nailed up in parish boards after all, and nobody to pay the bell shilling and the grave half-crown."

"The parish pays the grave half-crown, but not the bell shilling, because the bell's a luxery: but 'a can hardly do without the grave, poor body. However, I expect our mistress will pay all."

"A pretty maid as ever I see! But what's yer hurry, Joseph? The pore woman's dead, and you can't bring her to life, and you may as well sit down comfortable and finish another with us."

"I don't mind taking just the merest thimbleful of imagination more with ye, sonnies. But only a few minutes, because 'tis as 'tis."

"Of course, you'll have another drop. A man's twice the man after-

wards. You feel so warm and glorious, and you whop and slap at your work without any trouble, and everything goes on like sticks a-breaking. Too much liquor is bad, and leads us to that horned man in the smoky house; but, after all, many people haven't the gift of enjoying a soak, and since we are highly favoured with a power that way, we should make the most o't."

"True," said Mark Clark. "'Tis a talent the Lord has mercifully bestowed upon us, and we ought not to neglect it. But, what with the parsons and clerks and school-people and serious tea-parties, the merry old ways of good life have gone to the dogs—upon my carcase, they have!"

"Well, really, I must be onward again now," said Joseph.

"Now, now, Joseph; nonsense! The poor woman is dead, isn't she, and what's your hurry?"

"Well, I hope Providence won't be in a way with me for my doings," said Joseph, again sitting down. "I've been troubled with weak moments lately, 'tis true. I've been drinky once this month already, and I did not go to church a-Sunday, and I dropped a curse or two yesterday; so I don't want to go too far for my safety. Your next world is your next world, and not to be squandered lightly."

"I believe ye to be a chapel-member, Joseph. That I do."

"Oh, no, no! I don't go so far as that."

"For my part," said Coggan, "I'm staunch Church of England."

"Ay, and faith, so be I," said Mark Clark.

"I won't say much for myself: I don't wish to," Coggan continued, with that tendency to talk on principles which is characteristic of the barley-corn. "But I've never changed a single doctrine: I've stuck like a plaster to the old faith I was born in. Yes, there's this to be said for the Church, a man can belong to the Church and bide in his cheerful old inn, and never trouble or worry his mind about doctrines at all. But to be a meetinger, you must go to chapel in all winds and weathers, and make yerself as frantic as a skit. Not but that chapel-members be clever chaps enough in their way. They can lift up beautiful prayers out of their own heads, all about their families and shipwracks in the newspaper."

"They can—they can," said Mark Clark, with corroborative feeling; "but we Churchmen, you see, must have it all printed aforehand, or, dang it all, we should no more know what to say to a great person like Providence than babes unborn."

"Chapel-folk be more hand-in-glove with them above than we," said Joseph, thoughtfully.

"Yes," said Coggan. "We know very well that if anybody goes to heaven, they will. They've worked hard for it, and they deserve to have it, such as 'tis. I'm not such a fool as to pretend that we who stick to the Church have the same chance as they, because we know we have not. But I hate a feller who'll change his old ancient doctrines for the sake of getting to heaven. I'd as soon turn king's-evidence for the few pounds

you get. Why, neighbours, when every one of my taties were frosted, our Parson Thirdly were the man who gave me a sack for seed, though he hardly had one for his own use, and no money to buy 'em. If it hadn't been for him, I shouldn't hae had a tatie to put in my garden. D'ye think I'd turn after that? No, I'll stick to my side; and if we be in the wrong, so be it: I'll fall with the fallen!"

"Well said—very well said," observed Joseph.—"However, folks, I must be moving now: upon my life I must. Parson Thirdly will be waiting at the church gates, and there's the woman a-biding outside in the waggon."

"Joseph Poorgrass, don't be so miserable! Parson Thirdly won't mind. He's a generous man; he's found me in tracts for years, and I've consumed a good many in the course of a long and rather shady life; but he's never been the man to complain of the expense. Sit down."

The longer Joseph Poorgrass remained, the less was his spirit troubled by the duties which devolved upon him this afternoon. The minutes glided by uncounted, until the evening shades began perceptibly to deepen, and the eyes of the three were but sparkling points on the surface of darkness. Coggan's watch struck six from his pocket in the usual still small tones.

At that moment hasty steps were heard in the entry, and the door opened to admit the figure of Gabriel Oak, followed by the maid of the inn bearing a candle. He stared sternly at the one lengthy and two round faces of the sitters, which confronted him with the expressions of a fiddle and a couple of warming-pans. Joseph Poorgrass blinked, and shrank several inches into the background.

"Upon my soul, I'm ashamed of you; 'tis disgraceful, Joseph, disgraceful!" said Gabriel, indignantly. "Coggan, you call yourself a man, and don't know better than this!"

Coggan looked up indefinitely at Oak, one or other of his eyes occasionally opening and closing of its own accord, as if it were not a member but a dozy individual with a distinct personality.

"Don't take on so, shepherd!" said Mark Clark, looking reproachfully at the candle, which appeared to possess special features of interest for his eyes.

"Nobody can hurt a dead woman," at length said Coggan, with the precision of a machine. "All that could be done for her is done—she's beyond us: and why should a man put himself in a tearing hurry for lifeless clay that can neither feel nor see, and don't know what you do with her at all? If she'd been alive, I would have been the first to help her. If she now wanted victuals and drink, I'd pay for it, money down. But she's dead, and no speed of ours will bring her to life. The woman's past us—time spent upon her is throwed away: why should we hurry to do what's not required? Drink, shepherd, and be friends, for to-morrow we may be like her."

"We may," added Mark Clark, emphatically, at once drinking him-

self, to run no further risk of losing his chance by the event alluded to, Jan meanwhile merging his additional thoughts of to-morrow in a song:—

"To-mor-row, to-mor-row!
And while peace and plen-ty I find at my board,
With a heart free from sick-ness and sor-row,
With my friends will I share what to-day may af-ford,
And let them spread the ta-ble to-mor-row.
To-mor-row, to-mor——"

"Do hold thy horning, Jan!" said Oak; and turning upon Poorgrass, "As for you, Joseph, who do your wicked deeds in such confoundedly holy ways, you are as drunk as you can stand."

"No, Shepherd Oak, no! Listen to reason, shepherd. All that's the matter with me is the affliction called a multiplying eye, and that's how it is I look double to you—I mean you look double to me."

"A multiplying eye is a very distressing thing," said Mark Clark.

"It always comes on when I have been in a public-house a little time," said Joseph Poorgrass, meekly. "Yes, I see two of every sort, as if I were some holy man living in the times of King Noah and entering into the ark. . . . Y-y-y-yes," he added, becoming much affected by the picture of himself as a person thrown away, and shedding tears, "I feel too good for England: I ought to have lived in Genesis by rights, like the other men of sacrifice, and then I shouldn't have b-b-been called a d-d-drunkard in such a way!"

"I wish you'd show yourself a man of spirit, and not sit whining there!"

"Show myself a man of spirit? . . . Ah, well! let me take the name of drunkard humbly—let me be a man of contrite knees—let it be! I know that I always do say 'Please God' afore I do anything, from my getting up to my going down of the same, and I am willing to take as much disgrace as belongs to that holy act. Hah, yes! . . . But not a man of spirit? Have I ever allowed the toe of pride to be lifted against my person without shouting manfully that I question the right to do so? I enquire that query boldly!"

"We can't say that you have, Joseph Poorgrass," said Jan, emphatically.

"Never have I allowed such treatment to pass unquestioned! Yet the shepherd says in the face of that rich testimony that I am not a man of spirit! Well, let it pass by, and death is a kind friend."

Gabriel, seeing that neither of the three was in a fit state to take charge of the waggon for the remainder of the journey, made no reply, but, closing the door again upon them, went across to where the vehicle stood, now getting indistinct in the fog and gloom of this mildewy time. He pulled the horse's head from the large patch of turf it had eaten bare, readjusted the boughs over the coffin, and drove along through the unwholesome night.

It had gradually become rumoured in the village that the body to be brought and buried that day was all that was left of the unfortunate Fanny Robin who had followed the Eleventh from Casterbridge to Melchester. But, thanks to Boldwood's reticence and Oak's generosity, the lover she had followed had never been individualised as Troy. Gabriel hoped that the whole truth of the matter might not be published till at any rate the girl had been in her grave for a few days, when the interposing barriers of earth and time, and a sense that the events had been somewhat shut into oblivion, would deaden the sting that revelation and invidious remark would have for Bathsheba just now.

By the time that Gabriel reached the old manor-house, her residence, which lay in his way to the church, it was quite dark. A man came from the gate and said through the fog, which hung between them like blown flour,

"Is that Poorgrass with the corpse?"

Gabriel recognised the voice as that of the parson.

"The corpse is here, sir," said Gabriel.

"I have just been to inquire of Mrs. Troy if she could tell me the reason of the delay. I am afraid it is too late now for the funeral to be performed with proper decency. Have you the registrar's certificate?"

"No," said Gabriel. "I expect Poorgrass has that; and he's at the 'Buck's Head.' I forgot to ask him for it."

"Then that settles the matter. We'll put off the funeral till to-morrow morning. The body may be brought on to the church, or it may be left here at the farm and fetched by the bearers in the morning. They waited more than an hour, and have now gone home."

Gabriel had his reasons for thinking the latter a most objectionable plan, notwithstanding that Fanny had been an inmate of the farm-house for several years in the lifetime of Bathsheba's uncle. Visions of several unhappy contingencies which might arise from this delay flitted before him. But his will was not law, and he went indoors to enquire of his mistress what were her wishes on the subject. He found her in an unusual mood: her eyes as she looked up to him were suspicious and perplexed as with some antecedent thought. Troy had not yet returned. At first Bathsheba assented with a mien of indifference to his proposition that they should go on to the church at once with their burden; but immediately afterwards, following Gabriel to the gate, she swerved to the extreme of solicitousness on Fanny's account, and desired that the girl might be brought into the house. Oak argued upon the convenience of leaving her in the waggon, just as she lay now, with her flowers and green leaves about her, merely wheeling the vehicle into the coach-house till the morning, but to no purpose. "It is unkind and unchristian," she said, "to leave the poor thing in a coach-house all night."

"Very well, then," said the parson. "And I will arrange that the funeral shall take place early to-morrow. Perhaps Mrs. Troy is right in feeling that we cannot treat a dead fellow-creature too thoughtfully. We

must remember that though she may have erred grievously in leaving her home, she is still our sister; and it is to be believed that God's uncovenanted mercies are extended towards her, and that she is a member of the flock of Christ."

The parson's words spread into the heavy air with a sad yet unperturbed cadence, and Gabriel shed an honest tear. Bathsheba seemed unmoved. Mr. Thirdly then left them, and Gabriel lighted a lantern. Fetching three other men to assist him, they bore the unconscious truant indoors, placing the coffin on two benches in the middle of a little sitting-room next the hall, as Bathsheba directed.

Every one except Gabriel Oak then left the room. He still indecisively lingered beside the body. He was deeply troubled at the wretchedly ironical aspect that circumstances were putting on with regard to Troy's wife, and at his own powerlessness to counteract them. In spite of his careful manœuvring all this day, the very worst event that could in any way have happened in connection with the burial had happened now. Oak imagined a terrible discovery resulting from this afternoon's work that might cast over Bathsheba's life a shade which the interposition of many lapsing years might but indifferently lighten, and which nothing at all might altogether remove.

Suddenly, as in a last attempt to save Bathsheba from, at any rate, immediate anguish, he looked again, as he had looked before, at the chalk writing upon the coffin-lid. The scrawl was this simple one, "*Fanny Robin and child.*" Gabriel took his handkerchief and carefully rubbed out the two latter words. He then left the room, and went out quietly by the front door.

Maids-of-all-Work and Blue Books.

I.

Farewell rewards and fairies,
Good housewifes now may say,
For now foule slutts in dairies
Doe fare as well as they;
And tho' they sweepe their hearths no less
Than maydes were wont to do,
Yet who of late for cleanliness
Finds sixpence in her shoe?

We have all heard of a benevolent race of little pixies who live underground in subterranean passages and galleries. While people are asleep in their beds these friendly little creatures will come up from their homes in the depths of the earth and dust, and sort and put our houses in order, and repair the damages and waste of the day, light the fires, fill the cans, milk the cows. There is no end to their good offices. They reject all thanks, and are apt to disappear and give warning upon small provocation. Sir Walter Scott has written their history, and as one reads one might sometimes almost fancy that an allegory is being told of some little servant-maid of modern times—I do not mean the comfortable, respectable upper house and parlour-maid of villa and crescent-life, but of the little struggling maid-of-all-work dwelling under our feet or in the narrow passages and defiles of our great city. Do they when their work is finished sometimes immerge from their subterranean haunts, sit by flowing streams, float along upon lily leaves, or sport in moonlit fields, dancing in circles? I am afraid no such pleasant recreation is reserved for our poor little household drudges.

Most people who have ever rung bells, found their hot water ready set for their use, their breakfast waiting their convenience, will be interested in a Report recently laid before the House of Commons—the Blue Book which concerns these little maids.

It is written in the simplest way. Its rhetoric is made up of a few dates and numbers. Its phrases represent so much work done rather than words strung together. It has sentiment enough in its pages, and pathos and tragedy. They are classed *a*, *b*, and *c* for convenience. This remorseless record of life as it exists for a certain number of people is tabulated for easy reference; so are the sorrows and indifferences of which it treats in a few quiet words. The history of these 650 girls will be found in an appendix, says one sentence. No wonder that reviewers hesitate to pronounce upon such a literature.

"In January, 1873, you told me," says Mrs. Senior, "that you wished to have a woman's view as to the effect on girls of the System of Education at Pauper Schools. You asked me if I would undertake to visit the workhouse schools and report to you the conclusions at which I arrived. . . .

"I have given my attention almost exclusively to questions affecting the physical, moral, and domestic training at the schools. I have not attempted to judge of the scholastic work, as I required all the time allowed me for looking into the matters on which I knew that you more especially desired the judgment of a woman. I divided the enquiry into two parts:

"1. As to the present working of the system in schools.

"2. As to the after career of girls who have been placed out in the world."

This first part means many months of ceaseless investigation into metropolitan schools, country schools, orphanages, reformatories, &c.; the boarding-out system, as carried out in Cumberland and the North, &c.

The second division represents no less labour of a different kind.

"My next endeavour was to ascertain the history of the girls who had been placed in service from the schools during the last two years. I obtained the names and addresses, more or less exact, of about 650 girls who had been placed out in service in the years 1871-2 in all parts of London and its suburbs, and the history of each girl, as derived from the books or otherwise, was sought to be verified by personal investigation. The very great number of visits to be made, and enquiries to be set on foot, involved in this first investigation, could not within the time allowed be undertaken by myself personally, but the work was effectually carried out by the help of several indefatigable friends.

"I enquired myself personally into the cases of fifty of these girls," says Mrs. Senior, who has not been content with merely writing a report. She has lived it, heard it speak, gone straight to the human beings concerned in her Tables. Her own personal investigations are contained in Appendix G; in Appendix F are the histories investigated by her assistants.

"In order to ascertain the school history of each child," she continues, "I have usually found it necessary to consult, besides admission and discharge books, five enormous alphabetical registers, numerous volumes of relief lists, creed registers, service register, and chaplain's visiting books."

This is but a small part of the labour to be undertaken in writing a report of which every detail almost is a living figure in the great and terrible sum which is set before us all to work out as best we can, not only in Blue Books and pamphlets. Anybody may supply a running commentary upon the text, by looking about and using that useful power of common sense with which we are more or less gifted. The facts and data are not past things and distant conclusions—they are now, and round

about us. The children are there, the schools are there, the maid-servants are in the kitchens, the report is published, and anyone may read it who chooses.

II.

We should be indeed ungrateful to the work of those wise and far-seeing people who first turned their attention to the crying evils which existed in workhouse schools, and who first insisted upon separate schools for the children, if we did not begin by acknowledging that whatever is done now, and whatever further improvement may be found possible, theirs was the first and decisive step in the abolition of a great abuse. The workhouses are necessarily refuges for every species of failure in life, in conduct, in mind, in body. Such depressing and contaminating influence is the very last to which young children should ever be subjected. States of mind are as catching, especially at an early age, as some states of body. To see people who have neglected their opportunities, deserted their duties, succumbed to every sort of temptation, provided for by the state in a sort of semi-Hades of apathetic discontent, must certainly have no good effect upon the younger generation, already inheriting, perhaps, many of the proclivities that have brought this dismal fate upon their seniors.

The children, seeing their father a willing prisoner in fustian, their mother plodding doggedly along the ward in her blue-striped livery, come to look upon this unsatisfying place as a future to look to. Apathy seems to them a natural condition, low talk and common ways will be familiar sounds, they insensibly imbibe the fetid influence of the condition to which all these people have been brought; by misfortune was it?—or by wrong-doing?—who shall say, or whose the wrong-doing that has doomed these poor souls.

"The atmosphere of a workhouse that contains adult paupers is tainted with vice," says Mr. Tufnell, in his Report on the training of pauper children. "No one who regards the future happiness of the children would ever wish them to be educated within its precincts."

A matron of thirty years' experience to whom I once spoke, shook her head and said that she found it practically impossible to prevent ill effects from the contact of children and adults in the workhouse under her care.

Miss Cobbe says, speaking of the state of workhouses so lately as 1861—"Whatever may be our judgment of the treatment of the male able-bodied paupers, very decidedly condemnatory must be our conclusion as regards the management of female adults, for whom it may be said that a residence in the workhouse is commonly moral ruin. The last rags and shreds of modesty which the poor creature may have brought in from the outer world, are ruthlessly torn away by the hideous gossip over the labour of oakum picking, or in the idle lounging about the women's yard." And in a note we read—"In one metropolitan union it was found on

enquiry, that of 80 girls who had left the workhouse and gone to service, not one had continued in a respectable condition of life." *

The commissioners appointed to enquire into the system felt that nothing but evil could come to the children if things were allowed to continue in the state in which they found them. They worked with unintermitting energy and decision, and it was at their suggestion that separate and district schools were first instituted; separate schools being schools attached to one workhouse only, and built at a distance from the house; district schools being peopled by the children from three or four different workhouses, all brought together for greater convenience in teaching and organising.

Great sums of money have been spent. Fine buildings have been erected. Hundreds and hundreds of little paupers are now being struck off, taught, drilled, and educated by good teachers, with careful superintendents, in large houses, costing large sums of money. There can be no comparison between the present and the past, and there is not one of these children that does not owe gratitude to those who first laboured to deliver them from the house of bondage to which they seemed condemned. But it does not follow that because money has been spent, no further improvement is possible; and because some people have been wise and devoted, that no further good is to be done.

It seems as if every fact and theory of life had to be rediscovered by each of us practitioners of life in turn. We read about things, see them happen, listen to advice, give it more or less intelligently; but we each have to find out for ourselves what relations such things bear to ourselves—what is human in all this printers' ink, which of the figures come to life in our own case, instead of being units or statistics—which among our fellow-creatures are actually living persons for us; duties and claims, wants, necessities, possibilities.

The writer happened to come across a living statistic on the side of good and hopeful things, a bright-faced little creature in a Sunday bonnet, who gave her some account of her experience in her first place. She had been brought up in a separate school and had gone out about thirteen.

"Oh, I've been a servant for years!" said the little thing, who was ready enough to tell us all about herself. "I learnt ironing off the lady; I didn't know nothing about it. I didn't know nothing about anything. I didn't know where to buy the wood for the fire," exploding with laughter at the idea. "I run along the street and asked the first person I sor where the wood-shop was. I was frightened—oh, I was. They wasn't particular kind in my first place. I had plenty to eat—it wasn't anything of that. They jest give me an egg, and they says, 'There, get your dinner,' but not anything more. I had to do all the work. I'd no one to go to: oh! I cried the first night. I used to cry so," exploding again with laughter. "I had always slep in a ward full of other girls, and there I was all alone, and this was a great big house—oh, so big! and they told me to go down stairs, in

* This statement applies to twelve years ago.

a room by the kitchen all alone, with a long black passage. I might have screamed, but nobody would have heard. An archytec the gen'lman was. I got to break everything, I was so frightened; things tumbled down I shook so, and they sent me back to Mrs. ——, at the schools. They said I was no good, as I broke everything; and so I did—oh, I was frightened! . . . Then I got a place in a family where there was nine children. I was about fourteen then. I earned two shillings a week. I used to get up and light the fire, bath them and dress them, and git their breakfasts, and the lady sometimes would go up to London on business, and then I had the baby too, and it couldn't be left, and had to be fed. I'd take them all out for a walk on the common. There was one a cripple. She couldn't walk about. She was about nine year old. I used to carry her on my back. Then there was dinner, and to wash up after; and then by that time it would be tea-time agin. And then I had to put the nine children to bed and bath them, and clean up the rooms and the fires at night; there was no time in the morning. And then there would be the gen'lman's supper to get. Oh! that was a hard place. I wasn't in bed till twelve, and I'd be up by six. I stopped there nine months. I hadn't no one to help me. Oh, yes, I had; the baker, he told me of another place. I've been there three year. I'm cook, and they are very kind; but I tell the girls there's none 'on 'em had such work as me. I'm very fond of reading; but I 'aint no time for reading." . . .

She was a neat, bright, clever, stumpy little thing, with a sweet sort of merry voice.

"You would think Susy a giant if you could see some of them; you have no notion what little creatures they all are," said Mrs. ——, when I made some remarks about the child's size—and almost immediately came another visitor, smaller, shorter, paler than the first. This little maid had come to talk over the chances of a friend, to whom she seemed much attached.

"There is one thing about her," said this mite, with some dignity; "she don't come up to my shoulder. It's aginst her getting a good place."

This little woman had been single-handed in a school where there were 50 pupils to let in twice a-day, as well as two sets of lodgers to attend to. The owners of the house were very kind, but too busy themselves to help, and the poor pixie had struggled until her health had broken down. Her feet were swelled; she could no longer hold out when Mrs. —— found her. It is a terrific battle if one comes to think of it. One little soldier single-handed against a house and its wants, and the dust and the smuts, and the food and the inmates, and the bells, and the beds, and the fire and water to be served up in cans and stoves and plates. Atlas could carry the world on his shoulder, but what was his task compared to poor little Betty's?

III.

The writer has a friend among District Schools, who has more than once admitted her into the wards under his direction. At the time when he and his wife were appointed to their present position, the schools were in a bad and unsatisfactory state; notwithstanding all advantage of situation and arrangement, and liberal support, the health of the school-children was not what it should have been! Regularity, economy, uniformity—all these things seem desirable enough; but there is a point where we must all acknowledge that such things are intended for men's use, and not for their constraint alone, and my friends have made it their business to find out where that point exists.

Mrs. Senior suggests, among other things, some sort of home life in the schools: wards broken up, if possible, into divisions, which might rectify their weary uniformity—some system of home government; the nurse, perhaps, acting as mother, and the elder girls attending to the little ones and babies. "The children want *mothering*," says the Blue Book, in the natural tones of a woman's voice.

About some necessities there can be but one opinion—air, water, room, change, well-cooked food, ease, backs to the forms—all these things our Blue Book recommends, not in official language, but in a voice that speaks far more truly the real feeling which is now abroad. Judging from signs we see daily (perhaps even more among the rulers than among the ruled), the great age of red tape seems coming to a close. The good goddess Hygeia must be smiling as she sees her temples rising, her votaries assembling, singing her praises in public and in private, and worshipping her with many ablutions and ceremonies of mighty import!

My friends, Mr. and Mrs. ——, who have partially tried one of Mrs. Senior's plans in the establishment under their direction, say that their experiment has had a most excellent result. They began of their own accord by creating a nursery hour, without any idea of the good effects which were to follow, but they very soon found that the girls allowed to attend to the children delighted in the work, softened to the little ones, and the children themselves got on better than when they were lost in the great body of the house. The nursery is detached from the main building, and when we walked in, it was broad daylight—eight o'clock—June bed-time. The little paupers were going to bed in the great bright wards. All the windows were open; the children were taking off their blue stockings and heavy little boots. We met one three-year-old pattering adventurously down a passage, and carrying its shift in its hand. There were about a dozen little creatures in one room, where an elder girl was undressing them. They could take off their thick boots for themselves; one ambitious Jenny was tugging at a string with a serious flushed face; a friend about her own size was looking on with deep interest. We said "Good-night" to Jenny, who was too much absorbed to respond, but the little friend stuffed her hand into mine. It was a pretty sight in the next

room to come upon all the babies toddling round their tub and plashing the water with their hands. They were plump, comfortable little bodies, waiting their turn to be scrubbed, and they certainly did credit to kind Mrs. ——'s efforts for their comfort.

I don't think they spoke, these small nymphs in blue stockings and unbleached calico; they looked up at us with sweet, innocent faces; one said "Coo-bye;" one laughed and showed us her bed behind the door; another, a little baby boy, toddled forward half naked from the group—he was the youngest, and accustomed to be noticed; and so the kindly waters of the tub—that tepid evening stream that floats so many babes, that sparkles to so many little plashing hands—came flowing with its kind, refreshing depths into the workhouse nursery. The setting sun was shining through the tall open windows, and soft June breaths were blowing in.

For many years all these windows had been carefully filled in, the master told us; but now at last they have removed the ground glass, and let in the sight of the green, and the sunset and the summer-time. In the schoolroom especially the difference was very noticeable.

It was a Sunday evening, and while I was talking to Mrs. —— I had heard a distant sort of hymn in the air. The girls were singing as we came into the great schoolroom, about fifty girls were sitting upon the benches, and a music-master was at a harmonium playing and beating time.

They sang very sweetly, with very shrill and touching voices, one little class apart chaunted the hymn, and the others joined in. It was something about soldiers of the cross, with a sort of chorus.

As I stood by the superintendent he pointed to the window, through which we could see a dazzle of June and green and distant hills, and a great field, across which a long procession of these young soldiers went winding and rewinding in the sweet basking evening. One thought of the battle before them—all the hard work, the troubles, and friendlessness of their poor little lives. They were not abashed, and chaunted on with all the might of their young throats, an unconscious prayer for safety, for help, for courage, and defence. While the hymn lasts they are safe enough. Then one day it breaks off for each of them. "At sixteen," says the Board, they are free, and the little soldiers struggle off to meet the world. They can cater for themselves; come, go, loiter as they will; they have had experience enough, advice enough; or, for a change, there is the workhouse, where they will find a new teaching, and a new code of morality.

IV.

Perhaps to the general reader it may not be the details, or the classifications, or the results of the enquiries contained in this Blue Book, that will seem most interesting, but the feeling which is unconsciously shown by its very statistics—the unaffected goodness of heart and womanly mothership for all that is young, childish, foolish, and suffering. No one

can deny facts and the inevitable fatality of causes, of which the effects are, in this instance, the little stunted beings that crowd our schools and educational establishments. But such Reports as these do at least suggest a sort of law leading both to good and to evil—a fatality of good as well as of wrong doing—and make one believe that the genuine interest which some people are feeling, and which has already shown itself in such satisfactory and practical details, may reach many a poor child, by signs more and more comfortable, and tangible, and cheerful.

Where a book ends and the reader begins is as hard to determine as any other of those objective and subjective problems which are sometimes set. Here, as we read, the paragraphs turn into every day; into the writer, into the children, into one's own conscience, into other people's—into work, trouble, necessity, into the influences by which people affect one another. Books teach us to think; then comes action to interpret thinking into signs and ceremonies; then come human beings who enact the signs, who are our consciences, revealed, perhaps, our thoughts, responsive, who are in themselves hope fulfilled, who combine in some strange way all the moods, questions, facts, that we see tangibly spread out before us. It is almost as if one could look round at times and see the whole secret history of conscience mapped out in actual things, and doings; some of them stupid, jealous, shamefully incomplete; others gentle, and generous, and effective.

Two facts Mrs. Senior wishes us to bear in mind, if we try to draw some conclusion from that view of life which her report presents to us. One is, that the schools have to deal with bad material. The poor little heroines of this epic are stunted, stupid, unreceptive for the most part, though some people may well ask, Why should they be clever? How can they grow tall? and What is it that they have to receive? They come to the schools because there is no home in the world outside for them, because their parents have come to grief, or to trouble of some sort. They have to go out into the world again with their unsatisfactory little bodies and minds, because the schools can keep them no longer, at an age when other more fortunate children are shielded and loved and cared for, to struggle for themselves with difficulties, mistresses, incapacities, and dangers of every description. So much for the second division of Mrs. Senior's report. As regards that which applies to the changes she would wish to see in the schools, she says these apply to the system itself, and not to the working of it. She says, "I believe that, as a class, there are few people so painstaking, kindhearted, and indefatigable, as the present lot of officials connected with pauper and district schools." It is, perhaps, because of this that, for some years past, some of these officials and managers have been dissatisfied with the results of their hard and constant work—of all this money and trouble given. In district schools, as elsewhere, experience had to be paid for; and when such vast numbers are collected together, every trifling experiment must necessarily count a thousand-fold, and be multiplied again and again. The evil is gigantic, and almost impossible to grapple with.

V.

At present, one great difficulty consists in the classification of the children to be provided for. There are the orphans, whose only home is the parish and the school; the deserted children, whose parents may reappear to claim them, as well as those whose parents are incapacitated temporarily or otherwise; and there are, thirdly, the casuals, who are sometimes taken in and out by their parents as often as *eight times* in a year, and for whom, under existing circumstances, any legislation must be very indefinite.

The real body of the school consists of the children who have no other home to turn to, and no personal ties to lean upon, and whose welfare, as Mrs. Senior says, should, in any doubtful question, be made the main consideration.

Some masters say that, were the classes divided, and the good influence of the permanent scholars removed from the casuals, these poor little creatures would become so demoralised that they would not have a chance for improvement. Speaking in a general way, Mrs. Senior says that in large schools the officers hold that more good than harm is done by mixing the children; while the officers in smaller schools (who have perhaps better means of judging of individual cases) hold the contrary.

She goes on to say—"The difficulties of managing the pauper schools, even under the present system, are so great that one can heartily sympathise with the dread expressed by some officers of a change which, it appears to them, would add to their difficulties. We are none the less bound, however, to look simply at the question whether the presence of the casual children does or does not cause any moral deterioration to the permanent children, whose interests are chiefly at stake."

Here is a picture of the state of things that might occur, with every careful endeavour for right doing. "To the eye of the visitor the outward order of the schools is in most respects perfect, and it seems generally agreed that the presence of a mass of children already drilled into order has the best effect on new comers. We cannot, however, judge by external order of the real effect of the presence of the casuals. Whatever evil they may have learnt during their vagrant life, they know that it is for their interest to submit to discipline while at school, to conceal what could bring them into discredit with their superiors, and to avoid conduct and language that would entail punishment. Whatever discipline may exist in the school, the children in the playground and dormitories are under little supervision."

"In one school I saw a child of six years old whose language was so horrible that the matron was obliged to send her, as soon as lessons were over, to one of the dormitories in order to get her away from the other children. She was probably too young to know that it was to her interest to hold her tongue in the presence of officers. In a few years she would be more cunning, and keep her bad language for the playground and

dormitories. Another matron told me of a family of sisters who used to go in and out and return each time more and more versed in sin. From another I heard, among many examples, of a family of children who were constantly on the tramp, sleeping like animals in sheds, wandering about the country; children who were at first good and tractable, but who returned each time with more and more knowledge of evil."

"Among many officers I found one who spoke even more strongly than the rest, and whose opinion I consider of great value. She fully recognised the large amount of mischief which can be done in a school even by one child, and felt that the *least* important duty of a mistress is the supervision of children during school hours."

Many of the changes Mrs. Senior recommends are simple, feasible, and will apply to our own children in our own homes as well as to those in this strange cosmopolitan refuge which the necessity of the times has imposed upon our citizens.

If our children have round shoulders, shorn heads, weak eyes—if a certain number of them seem dull, stupid, and incapable of the common duties of life—if their nurses and teachers complain of their bad temper, untruthfulness, apathy, we must feel that for these special children, much as we have done already, we have not yet done enough.

Suppose they are ill, with long and chronic ailments, if we leave them for hours and hours unoccupied in a bare room learning a habit of idleness and apathy only too easy to acquire, and sometimes impossible to forget, we must feel that in one sense only we are doing our duty. You cannot inculcate moral qualities by word of command; intelligence, self-reliance, trust, sympathy—these things can't be dealt out in copy-books or written upon a slate.

Teachers and managers of schools have themselves raised the standard of that which is expected; and as the standard is raised, there will be less and less machinery, and more and more of natural feeling introduced, if it pleases Heaven to give us more wisdom and knowledge of the laws which govern life and human beings; from members of the Cabinet to little pauper children.

A wise and experienced person writes:—

"We teach them indeed to read and write, and read and sing hymns. All that part of their education is probably quite as good as what is given in the day-schools of the ordinary poor. Also we teach them that part of religion which may be conveyed in the form of question and answer. But it is only the sum of all that makes human nature, more emphatically woman's nature, beautiful, useful, or happy. Her moral being is left wholly uncultivated. She possesses nothing of her own, not even her clothes or the hair on her head. How is she to go out inspired with respect for the rights of property, and accustomed to control the natural impulses of childish covetousness? Worse than all, the human affections of the girl are all checked, and with them, almost inevitably, those religious ones which naturally rise through the earthly parents' love to the

Father in Heaven. The workhouse girl is the child of an institution. She is driven about with the rest of the flock, from dormitory to schoolroom, and from schoolroom to workhouse yard, not harshly or unkindly, but always as one of a herd, whether well or ill cared for. She is nobody's Mary or Kate, to be individually thought of."

VI.

Having gone carefully into the details of the management of these schools, Mrs. Senior, as I have said, proceeded to follow up the results of this management; and her figures, as compared to those in the note of Miss Cobbe's article (where of 80 girls 80 were to be reckoned in the lowest category), are less discouraging than they might seem at a first glance.

"Following out the scheme already stated, we took some trouble to trace out the careers of the girls brought up in the great amalgamated schools and in the separate schools, and, with the help of some experienced persons, to compare them together and divide them into classes; the result was as follows:—

	Girls brought up in District Schools.	Girls brought up in Separate Schools.
Good . . .	28	51
Fair . . .	64	82
Unsatisfactory . .	106	78
Bad	47	85
	245	246

Some idea may be formed of the difficulty and trouble which these few numbers have given to those who compiled them, and who have tried to add up this sum in human nature, by a glance at the Appendix, where will be found a history of each one of these cases traced out from records in school books, to the endless streets, suburban roads, lines of brick and rail, and humanity along which these little entries drift to their fate. The girls themselves have been produced from their back kitchens, and the mistresses encountered in their parlours. Out of complaints and cross-complaints, and good sense and moderate judgment, the daily story becomes a figure again counting in its place.

It is not long ago since I heard some one (with a right than which there is none greater) speaking of the force of contained power and of simple statement as compared to that of vehemence and picturesqueness of language. Here, in the Appendix of Mrs. Senior's Report, are histories, of which I have selected two or three at random. They are not very eventful, and their force most assuredly consists in this power of facts, tending towards the same results; uneventful units, whose histories count in the great sum just as surely as those of the others for whom they rub and scrub and toil.

I might multiply examples, but they are but repetitions of one another

and all in the same way seem to point more or less to two necessities—that of some greater individuality of training when in the schools, and of more complete system of supervision when the school has become daily life.

Here is poor C. D., whose career, as it is traced from book to book, seems typical enough. She is clever, with "high" notions, and goes to service; and then she loses her places again and again, reappears in one book and another, "admission, dismissal, readmission." Here she is under the heading of "distress from service," sent to a home; then follow six admissions, six discharges; lastly, she goes to Highgate Infirmary, and there comes the last entry, "Died June 22, 1871, of phthisis, aged eighteen."

There are naughty girls, and a certain number of good ones, in the lists published by Mrs. Senior.

G. goes from place to place, has fainting fits, hates going to her aunt between places, as relations don't like being at expense. First place—too hard, not in bed till past twelve sometimes. J. M. S., one eye, half witted, no friends, twenty years of age. J. T., deserted child, no friends, whitlow, round shoulder.

As specimens of the class which may well be termed unsatisfactory, come—

No. 1. Pilferer, untruthful, idle, incorrigibly dirty.

No. 2. Very dishonest, dirty. Mistress, a kind person, keeps her because she cannot give her a character.

No. 4. Being refused leave to go out, howls till a crowd is collected.

No. 5. Improving, but throws herself on the ground when people attempt to teach her.

No. 12. Clean, destructive, curiously apathetic.

No. 20. Very bad temper, unkind to children, dishonest, untruthful, dirty. Two mistresses give an equally bad account.

Finally come the girls who have absconded with or without valuables, who are known to be leading immoral lives.

By 15 Vict. cap. ii. sec. 3 & 4, the guardians are required, so long as the servant is under sixteen, and resides within five miles of the workhouse, to visit the person at least twice in every year, and report in writing if the person is subjected to cruel treatment in any respect.

At some of the schools the chaplains keep up with the girls in their places after the official hour has struck for them. But when one remembers the average length of a man's life, and the number of girls that pass through the schools, it will be seen how impossible a task this must be for any single person to accomplish thoroughly.

"We have found," says the Report, "many really admirable mistresses, homely women, taking a maternal interest in the girls; sparing no pains to teach and inspect personally the work of the house, and who understood that the little servant needed some pleasure and relaxation. Without any parade we have often heard from a mistress of a shilling

given now and then to the girl to be spent in her own pleasure, of little presents to her subscribed for by the children." But at the same time the statistics show how many there are among them who disappear entirely, and in the case of workhouse girls we know too well what this disappearance means.

A friend of Mrs. Senior, writing to her, says :—

"The answers given to me by the mistresses of girls sent to service from the metropolitan pauper schools were so uniform in character, that I think the system of training must be in a great measure answerable for characteristics so general and so strongly marked. I have made enquiries as to 40 girls.

"The girls were all without exception well taught in reading and writing; in arithmetic, as far as I could ascertain, they were fairly competent.

"All without exception were well taught in needlework, as regards the mere execution of stitches; and *all with one exception were unable to arrange or do any sort of needlework without constant supervision.**

"All without exception are well taught in the element of religious knowledge.

"All without exception are curiously apathetic in temperament, described to me as not caring for anything, taking no interest, not enjoying, seeming like old people. All with one exception were stunted in growth and physical development, even where the health was good.

"If we compare the girls in pauper schools with girls kept at home by family necessity, or sent to service at fourteen or fifteen, I think we shall find the following differences :—The house girls have infinitely more life and energy, and it is much easier to teach them their work. They are often very troublesome to learn at first, but at least half of them are fairly good tempered; those with defective tempers are seldom invincibly stubborn or outrageous, and there is no difference between their physical development and that of all other classes."

A matron of a workhouse said to me the other day—"I knew a nice, good girl who was dismissed then and there by her mistress for what do you think, ma'am? for falling asleep in the day-time. I say it is not natural for a girl of sixteen to go fast asleep in the day-time, unless she is tired out and can't keep up any longer."

"People turn them off and let them go, without a thought," she continued. "I myself met a poor child wandering about in the street, not knowing where to turn. I took her home, and she is now my servant; but there is no knowing where she might be if I hadn't chanced to meet her."

Three girls, who were just going out to service from a district school, came into the superintendent's parlour the other day while I happened to be there; they were girls of sixteen, but they looked scarcely thirteen in

* This seems an excellent illustration of the defect of too much system in education.

their crops and pinafores. One of them appeared utterly stupid, and seemed to stare at my questions instead of answering them. The second was silent but intelligent, with wondering blue eyes and a very sweet expression. The third girl talked a good deal, but only by rote; she had been out already, but had been sent back by her mistress, she said. When I asked her what she had done in her place, she wandered off into some housemaid's catechism.

"What did you think about, the first morning when you awoke?" said Mrs. ——.

"I couldn't think where I was," said the girl; "it was so small all round, with paper on the walls."

"And what happened next?" said Mrs. ——.

Here the little housemaid started off rapidly. "Rise at 'alf-past five, throw open the window, light the kitching fire, then do the parlour, carefully turning down the 'earth-rug for fear it should be spiled, then sweep and dust the sitting-room, scattering tea-leaves," &c.

Perhaps the little thing's practice had not been equal to her precept; happily for herself she was still of an age to be received into the school and into her pinafore again. If she breaks down a second time she will only have the workhouse for a refuge; and what a workhouse is for young and impressionable girls, every guardian, every master, every matron will tell you.* Any Blue Books I have ever read, any inspectors I have ever spoken to, agree upon this subject.

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* Appendix A is one bright gleam of hope into a somewhat sombre picture, and gives a delightful impression of children sent away from their discipline, growing and brightening, and running about in a sort of earthly paradise, with Miss Preusser as Lady President upon earth.

A migration from Bethnal-green to Burnside, Ambleside, Troutbeck, and Grassmere, must in itself be a change for the better. In these districts it has become a custom, established by the efforts of certain ladies living in the neighbourhood, to receive the children into the cottages, not exactly for money, for the money allowed only just defrays the children's expenses. They arrive weakly in body, dull, and vacant, but they soon begin to revive. Miss Preusser told Mrs. Senior that one little girl increased 16 lbs. in weight in the first year after her arrival from London. "I constantly saw little girls taking care of young children and babies," says Mrs. Senior, "or engaged in some bit of house-work. My impression is that in no case had they been taken in exclusively for the sake of payment. The people were all earning good wages, seemed doing comfortably, and not to be in need of this source of income."

Mrs. Senior then went on to Edinburgh. "I found twenty-two of these children in villages about six miles out of Edinburgh, in the families of miners and labourers. The houses are clean, most of them remarkably so, and the foster-mothers turned down their beds with great pride.

"At Ellsrickle, high among the hills, I saw twenty-four children all boarded out in the families of crofters. In several cases the head of the family, besides cultivating his few acres of land, has a loom at which he works at odd hours. The houses are ideals of comfort and thrift. Most families have a cow—some even two—and a good garden, besides a few acres of farm. Out of school-hours the children work on the farm, in the garden, and help their foster-parents.

I have been told in one district school that the most troublesome and unmanageable girls are those who have, by the desire of the guardians, passed through a workhouse, and remained there for some time before being despatched to the school.

VII.

Women are, perhaps, naturally more suspicious and nervously impressionable than men, and for this very reason are better able to observe those details which so greatly concern little children and young girls. Surely it is a wise and far-seeing legislature that allows for this difference; that attempts to suit the intelligence at its command to the work to be accomplished.

Here we find a woman doing woman's work, patiently following out detail after detail, minutely inspecting wards, and clothes, and apparatus of every kind, reporting conscientiously, and bringing forward her long year's work. It is for other minds to generalise and legislate again upon this work, which seems to have been honestly carried out, and unweariedly pursued to its end.

Miss Cobbe describes an experiment that was tried by some ladies at Bristol not long ago. They acquainted themselves with the addresses of the girls going into service, called on each mistress, expressed their interest in the little servant, and asked permission for her to attend a Sunday afternoon class. Invariably it has been found that the mistresses take in good part such visits, made with proper courtesy.

"I saw the village school managed by a young schoolmistress, with boys and girls of all ages all learning together; the mistress told me she had not the least trouble in managing the boys. I never saw a finer set of children, which, considering the pure air, the out-door life, and the milk without stint supplied to them, is not to be wondered at. Most of the foster-parents I saw in Scotland have been taking in children for over twenty years. I did not see a single case of ophthalmia in the boarded-out children. They often come afflicted with strange blurs and blemishes, which disappear by degrees. The children, almost without exception," says Mrs. Senior, "looked strong, and thriving, and happy. It would, in my opinion, be an inestimable advantage to orphans to be boarded out; provided that the system were properly carried out. As to the objections which are raised about the difficulties of finding homes, Miss Florence Hill writes:—'The question for us to consider is, whether homes can be found in England where children can be paid for, in numbers sufficient to receive all who should be boarded out; and I have no hesitation in saying that sufficient good homes can be found if we take the trouble to look for them. I believe this to be the case because, wherever the plan has been established, with a reasonable amount of care to make known what is required, and to awaken sympathy among the respectable working-class for the forlorn condition of the workhouse child, *more homes offer than there are children to put into them.*' Of course this will not be the case directly the plan is introduced into a fresh neighbourhood. A little time is wanted for the foster-parent class to understand what is required of them. In Scotland, where not only pauper and deserted orphan children, but a large number whose parents are in the workhouse, are boarded out, so that the demand for homes is far greater than in England, I have been told over and over again that the number offered far exceeds that of the children to be disposed of."

Mrs. Senior would further add to this a system of Government supervision. The scheme, which is simple enough, consists of a certain number of paid agents to visit the young servants in their places; a certain number of ladies to befriend them; a certain number of post-cards ready addressed for the girls to post upon leaving their situations; one central office, or registry, where their names might be entered into books; and lastly, a certain number of small homes for them to go to in the intervals of service, where they may find help and advice. By the kindness of Mr. Flower (who has given it for this use) a little house has been already opened in Battersea.* It has nice green curtains, with clean little iron beds, and a cheerful front sitting-room, a convenient washhouse, fresh air, an enclosed yard, and a matron. Here the girls may cook, sew, rest, find advice and useful help. It is nothing new that the little homes have to give; but after all it is not anything new that any of us want; only the old blessing of asking and receiving, of friends and helpful succour answering to the call of our forlorn voices.

And what prayer, in words, in works, in good will, was ever prayed that was not answered in one way or another? We look life in the face, and hear of the laws that seem to rule its progress; we watch years go by, read Reports, see people in every sort of trouble, failure, and flurry, trying to help, regulate, and order the disorder. Some are praying to God, others praying to men. As we watch the rout go by, as we travel along it ourselves, we cannot but be struck by the importance of every day, as well as by its profanity, by the meaning of its trivialities, amenities, and co-operations, all dominated by a law of which we dimly recognise the rule, —a law to which we may open our hearts if we will, as it reaches us in this our common every day, our sacred every day. And by this supreme law each one of us in turn is touched. You are responsible to it, you wretched orphans flung upon evil shores; you are responsible, wise matrons, safe in port, anchored and sheltered from storm; you children, awakening in rows in the wards of the great refuges; you rulers and overseers, looking out afar; you critics and penny-a-liners and young men, maidens and old maids, according to your light and your power of life.

And besides this solemn law of the duty, varying in degree for each of us, there is also a gift, divine though we call it human, a multiplying, renovating charity, of pity and goodwill. It does not fail though the multitude is so great, and though the bread and the fishes that have been given by the Master to dispense among the hungry crowd seem so inadequate to their wants.

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* 33 Robertson Street, Battersea.

The Danish National Theatre.

The only instance in which unfamiliar forms of culture have a claim on public attention is when they are wholly original and individual. The development of the ages is now too vast for men to spare much time in the study of what is merely imitative, and even reproductions of ancient phases of art and literature must now be very excellent or very vigorous to succeed in arresting general interest. But art is no respecter of persons, and merit in nations as in individuals is still not measured by wealth or size, and it sometimes happens even in these days that what is most worthy of attention is to be discovered in narrow and impoverished circles of men, the light of genius burning all the clearer for the atmospheric compression in which it is forced to exist. Of modern peoples none has displayed the truth of this fact more notably than Denmark, a country so weak and poor, so isolated among inimical races, so forlorn of all geographical protection, that its very place among nations seems to have been preserved by a series of accidents, and which yet has been able, by the brilliance of the individual men of genius it has produced, to keep its distinct and honourable place in the world of science and letters during a century and a half of perilous struggle for existence. There is not another of the minor countries of Europe that can point to names so universally illustrious in their different spheres as Örsted, Thorwaldsen, Öhlenschlæger, Madvig, H. C. Andersen. The labours of these men, by nature of their craft, speak to all cultivated persons; the electro-magnetic discoveries of Örsted tinge all modern habits of life; the fairy-stories of Andersen make an enchanted land of every well-conducted nursery. These men have scarcely influenced thought in their own land more strongly than they have the thought of Europe. But I purpose here to speak a little of a form of culture which has penetrated no less deeply into the spiritual life of Denmark, and which by its very nature is restricted in its workings to the native intelligence.

Of all the small nations of Europe, Denmark is the only one that has succeeded in founding and preserving a truly national dramatic art. One has but to compare it in this respect with the surrounding lands of a cognate character, with Sweden, Norway, Holland, to perceive at once the complete difference of individuality. In all these countries one finds, to be sure, what is called a Royal Theatre, but on examining the *répertoire* one is sure at once to find the bulk of acting plays to be translations or adaptations. If the popular taste is romantic, the tendency will be

towards Iffland and Kotzebue, tempered with a judicious selection from Shakespere and Schiller; if farcical, perhaps native talent will be allowed to compete with adaptations from Scribe, while the gaps will be filled up with vaudevilles and operettas translated from the French, and set on the stage purely to give employment to the gregarious multitude that sing tolerably and act most intolerably. In such a depressing atmosphere as this the stage can hardly be said to exist; what poetical talent the nation possesses pours itself into other channels, and sometimes a theatre is found stranded in a position of such hopeless incompetence, that it is ready to adopt the masterpieces of the contemporary English drama.

But the old dingy theatre that is being at this very moment pulled down in Copenhagen has another tale to tell than such a dreary one. If, like the lady in the "Thousand and One Nights," it might stand as long as it had an interesting story to relate, it would deliver a long series of lectures on the literary life of Denmark, and would secure its existence for a good many weeks. For within its walls almost all that is really national and individual in the poetic literature of the country has found at one time or another its place and voice. Within the walls that now no more will ever display their faded roses and smoky garlands to the searching flare of the footlights, almost every Danish poet of eminence—with the exception of Grundtvig, perhaps every one—has received the plaudits of the people, and been taken personally into the sympathy of the nation in a way no merely study-writer ever can be taken. Perhaps this is why the Danes preserve such an astonishing personal love for their dead poets. Men who had seen the white, sick face of Ewald grow whiter under the storms of applause, and the long thin fingers press the aching brow in an agony of nervous agitation; the next generation that saw Öhlenschlæger, large and burly, in his stall, receive the plaudits like a comfortable burgess, one of themselves; the younger men that knew the haughty, keen face of Hertz, master of all the best æsthetic culture that his age could give, yet a Dane in every feature, and a type to every romantic youth of what a Dane should be—these men had a sense of being a living part and parcel of the national poetic life such as no citizens have had save at Athens and Florence and Weimar; and their sympathy has been so far wider than these that it was not the emotion of a single circle, however brilliant, of a single city, however potent, but of a whole nation not potent or brilliant at all, but beating to the heart's core with that warm blood of patriotism that has sent its men, again and again, to certain, hopeless death with cheerful resignation. It is this living force in the dramatic art of Denmark that makes it worthy of study. No lyric or scenic excellence in native writers, no glittering and costly ornament, could have secured to the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen the wonderful influence that it has had over public life, if it had not in some way been able to stand as the representative of the best national life of the country. It is this that gives it a unique place in the history of the modern drama. In Copenhagen the stage has been, what it has not for centuries been in London, the organ by which poetry of the

highest class speaks to the masses. The nearest parallel to the position of the Danish Theatre is found amongst ourselves in the new-born popularity of concerts of classical music. Just as crowds throng to hear the elaborate and delicate harmonies of Beethoven and Schumann, till one is set wondering how much of this is habit and fashion, and how much appreciation of the noblest art, so in Copenhagen is one astonished and puzzled to see crowded audiences, night after night, receive with applause dramatic poems that take a place among the most exquisite and subtle works in the language.

Nor is the position of the theatre as a means of widely popularising the higher culture the only or the main service it performs: it is a school for patriotism. Here the people hear their native tongue spoken most purely and most beautifully, and the peculiar character of the ablest plays on the boards gives the audience an opportunity of almost breathing a condensed air of love for the Fatherland. The best Danish comedies, the old-fashioned but still popular pieces of Holberg, deal almost wholly with life in Copenhagen, and after the lapse of 150 years the satire in them which lashes an affectation of German taste and German fashion is as welcome and as fresh as ever; the most popular tragedies are those of Öhlenschlæger, almost without exception occupied with the mythic or the heroic life of early Scandinavia; the later dramas of Heiberg mingle poetic romance with life out in the woods and by the lakes of Zealand; while the farces of Hostrup never stray outside the walls of Copenhagen, but point out to a keenly-appreciative audience the ludicrous side of the men and women that jostle them hourly in the familiar, homely streets. In a community so small that almost everybody knows everybody else, a copious literature studded with local allusion becomes as intensely interesting to the populace as the *vers de société* of a witty poet become to his circle of admirers and butts; and when the interest so captured is led to concentrate itself on topics of the gravest national importance, art approaches its apotheosis, and nears the fulfilment of its highest aim. In fact, if a foreign power secured Copenhagen and understood the temper of the people, its first act would undoubtedly be to shut for an indefinite period the doors of the Royal Theatre.

The fact that at this very time the building that has been the scene of so much intellectual vitality is being pulled down to make room for a splendid successor just finished at its side, has led me to take this opportunity of saying a few words on what is unique and important about dramatic art in Denmark. The ugly old theatre was a disgrace to Kongens Nytorv, the handsome central square of Copenhagen, and its area has long been quite unable to offer comfortable sitting room to the audience. It is well that it should be pulled down and a better house be opened; but in the moment of destruction a thought of gratitude seems due to the building that has seen so many triumphs of art, so many brilliant poetical successes, and had so large a share in the best life of the

country. It is one of the oldest theatres in Europe, having reached the age, most unusual in this class of houses, of 126 years. In Paris, where dramatic art has so lovingly been studied, and where the passion for scenic representation was so early developed, only two out of the thirty or more theatres now open dates from the last century—the Théâtre Français from 1782, and the Théâtre Porte St. Martin from 1781. The latter suffered so severely under the Commune in 1871 that it hardly comes into the category. Here in London almost all the theatres date, in their present condition, later than 1800, although several of the most important occupy the same classical ground as houses that have been destroyed by fire. This greatest enemy of theatres has wonderfully spared the stage at Copenhagen, where the Royal Theatre, built in 1784, has contrived to last till now, to undergo the more ignominious fate of being pulled stone from stone.

When Eigtroed, the architect, finished it in 1748, it was not the eyesore that it has been of late years; it was considered an adornment to that very Kongens Nytorv that now groans under its hideousness. The growth of the audience, the necessity of more machinery and more furniture, has at various times obliged the management to throw out frightful fungus-growths, to heave up the roof, and make all manner of emendations that have destroyed the last vestiges of shapeliness. It was the first theatre where the Danish drama found a firm place to settle in; and after doubtful and dangerous sojourns in Grönnegade and other places, this secure habitation was a great step forward. It seated, however, only 800 spectators; and although the decorations and machinery were so magnificent that a performance was announced gratis, merely that there might be an opportunity of impressing society with a Mercury on clouds, and Night brought on in an airy chariot drawn by two painted horses, still a modern audience might have grumbled at having to spend an evening, or rather an afternoon—for the performances began at 5 P.M.—in the old building. The stage was lighted up with tallow candles, which had to be briskly snuffed by a special attendant; the orchestra could only muster ten pieces, and the wardrobe suffered from a complaint the most terrible for green-rooms, poverty of costumes. The heart and soul of the management was Holberg, that most gifted of all Danes before or since, who more than any other man has succeeded in lifting his country into an honourable place among the nations. If it be true, as has been said, that Goethe created for Germany the rank it holds in the literature of Europe, much more true is it that Denmark owes to Holberg what rank she has succeeded in attaining. This remarkable man played so important a rôle in the dramatic life of the early times of which we speak, that a few words seem demanded here on his life and personal character. He was born, like so many other men who have made a fame in Denmark, in Norway, in 1684. When he was eighteen he came up to study at the University of Copenhagen, and, being left almost entirely destitute, was thrown on the resources of his own talents. Wandering all over the north of Europe,

he came at last to Oxford, where he lived for two years, studying at the University, and subsisting in the meanwhile by teaching languages and music. After years of extraordinary adventures, including a journey on foot from Brussels to Marseilles, a narrow escape from the Inquisition at Genoa, and a return journey on foot from Rome over the Alps to Amsterdam, he settled in Copenhagen about the year 1716. Already a great part of his historical works was written, and he gave himself now to law and to philology. His name became generally famous in Denmark as that of a brilliant writer on the subjects just mentioned, but no one suspected that a series of comic poems, published under the pseudonym of Hans Mikkelsen, and over which Copenhagen became periodically convulsed with laughter, were produced by the grave Professor of Jurisprudence. From 1710 to 1728 he successfully preserved this authorship a secret from the world; but when a circle of those friends to whom his humorous genius was known besought him to try to write for the Danish stage comedies that should banish French adaptation from the theatrical *répertoire*, in assenting he took a place before the public as a comic poet which has outshone all his reputation in science and history, bright as that still is. Until then Copenhagen had possessed a German and a French, but no Danish theatre. The first of Holberg's Danish comedies that was produced was the *Pewterer turned Politician* (*Den pòlitiske Kandstöber*), a piece that recalls somewhat the style of Ben Jonson in the *Alchemist*, but which for the rest is so wholly original, so happily constructed in plot, so exquisitely funny in evolution, that it is one of the most remarkable works ever produced in Scandinavia. Had Molière never lived, the genius of Holberg would have proved itself superhuman; but the fact is that the Danish poet, in the course of his travels, had had opportunity to study the French comedian thoroughly, and had adopted the happy notion of satirising affectation and vice in Copenhagen, not in the same but in a parallel way with that adopted by Molière in lashing Parisian society. In consequence, the series of Holberg's dramas display no imitation, but a general similarity of method, while the precise nature of the wit is characteristic only of himself. These comedies so far belong to the school represented among ourselves by Ben Jonson, and in our own day by Dickens, that the source of amusement is not found in intrigue, nor mainly in the development of the plot, but in the art of bringing prominently forward certain oddities of character, which in the Shakesperian time were called "humours." Holberg's loving study of the French drama preserved him from the temptation of exaggerating these studies of eccentric character into caricature; the odd lines are just deepened a little beyond what nature commonly presents, and that is all. These comedies show no signs of losing their freshness. They are as popular on the stage to-day as they were 150 years ago, and compared with those English plays that just preceded them, the writings of Congreve and Colley Cibber, they appear astonishingly modern, and as superior in wit as they are in morality and decency; while Holberg's

humorous epics and lyrics have long ago gone the way of most such writing, and are honourably unread in every gentleman's library. The thirty Holbergian comedies formed the nucleus of the Danish drama. It was in 1722, before the actors had found a home in Kongens Nytorv, that the *Pewterer turned Politician* was produced, and the rest followed in quick succession. Some remarks in one of them against the German tendencies of the ministry then in power had the effect of bringing upon Holberg the displeasure of men in authority; an attempt was made to burn the play publicly, together with another peccant book of Holberg's, the comic epic of *Peder Paars*, and to punish the author. Fortunately King Frederick the Fourth took the poet's part, and this incident only served to intensify popular interest in dramatic representations.

When the Royal Company flitted over to Kongens Nytorv in 1748, Holberg was the heart and soul of the new enterprise. The *répertoire* consisted almost entirely of his own comedies, and of translations of the best pieces of Molière. He was fortunate enough to secure in Clementin and Londemann two interpreters whose traditions still cling about the stage, and whose genius, if we may trust the reports of contemporary writers, was in the highest degree suited to set the creations of the great humorist in the broadest and wittiest manner before an audience that had to be educated into appreciation. The memory of these two men is so far interesting to us, as there seems no doubt that it is to them and to their great master that we owe the chaste and judicious style in acting which still characterises the Danish stage. A stranger from London or Berlin, we will not say from Paris, is struck in Copenhagen by the wonderful reserve and poetical repose that characterises the general tone of the acting: no one is permitted to rave and saw the air; it is preferred to lose a little in sensation, if thereby something can be gained in completeness. The great merit now-a-days of Danish acting is not the supreme excellence of a single performance so much as the intelligence of the whole company, and the happy way in which all the important parts are individually made to build up the general harmony of effect. This chastity of art has come down as a tradition from Clementin and Londemann, and for this, if for nothing else, they deserve a moment's recollection.

In 1772, the Royal Theatre entered upon a fresh and fortunate epoch. It became a pensioner of Government, and at the same time received its first important enlargement. This crisis was simultaneous with two events of literary importance. One was the production of the lyrical dramas of Johannes Ewald, the poet who composed the well-known national hymn,

King Christian stood by the high mast,

and who composed, lying on his back in bed, dying, like Heine, by inches, some of the masterpieces of Danish dramatic literature; and the other was the production of a single play so unique in its character that it is worth while to pause a few minutes to discuss it. In the course of fifty years, no poet had risen up whose talents in any way fitted him to carry on the war

against affectation that Holberg had fought so bravely and so successfully. The comedies of that author, however, still kept the stage, and the particular forms of folly satirised by them had long ago died and faded into thin air. But affectation has a thousand hydra-heads, and if a Hercules annihilate one, there are nine hundred and ninety-nine left. The craving after German support and German fashions was indeed dead in 1772, but another fearful craving had taken its place, a yearning after the stilted and beperiwigged chivalry that passed for good manners and good taste in France, or rather on the French heroic stage. To act in real life like the heroes of the tragedies of Voltaire was the universal bourgeois ideal in Copenhagen, and to talk as much as possible in alexandrines the apex of good breeding. Zaire was the model for a romantic Danish lady. This rococo taste had penetrated to the theatre, where the nobility and the court had introduced it after the death of Holberg. Voltaire had been translated and imitated with great popular success; and when the Royal Theatre was opened anew after its enlargement, a native tragedy by the court poet, Nordahl Brun, was performed on the opening night. This production, which out-Alzired Alzire, was the finishing touch given to the exotic absurdity. A young man, who had hitherto been known only as the president of a kind of club of wits, rose up and with one blow slew this rouged and ruffled creature. His name was Wessel, and the weapon he used was a little tragedy called *Love without Stockings*. The title was quite *en règle; Love without Hope, Love without Fortune, Love without Recompense*, all these were familiar; and why not *Love without Stockings?* The populace thronged to see this novelty, and Zaire and Zarine and all the other fantastic absurdities faded away in a roar of universal laughter. *Love without Stockings* is in some respects unique in literature. The only thing I know that is in any way parallel to it is Lord Buckingham's *Rehearsal*; and it differs from that inasmuch as that, while the *Rehearsal* parodies certain individual pieces of Dryden and others, Wessel's play is a parody of a whole class of dramas. *Love without Stockings!* Cannot one love without possessing stockings? Certainly not, answers Wessel; at all events not in the age of knee-breeches. And out of this thought he developes a plot wholly in accordance with the arbitrary rules of French tragedy, with the three unities intact, with a hero and his friend, a heroine and her confidante, with a Fate that pursues the lovers, with their struggle against it, their fall and tragic death. And the whole is worked out in the most pathetic alexandrines, and with a pompous, ornate diction. At the same time, while he adheres strictly to the rules of French tragedy, he does so in such a manner as to make these rules in the highest degree ridiculous, and to set the faults of this kind of writing in the very plainest light. The wedding day of the two lovers has arrived; all is ready, the priest is waiting, the bride is adorned, but alas! the bridegroom has no stockings, or, at all events, no white ones. What can he do? Buy a pair? But he has no money. Borrow a pair of his bride? On the one hand, it would not be proper; on the other his legs

are too big. But his rival is rich, is the possessor of many pairs of white stockings; the lover fights a hard battle, or makes out that he does, between virtue and love—but love prevails, and he steals a pair. Adorned in them he marches off to the church with his bride, but on the way the larceny is discovered, and the rival holds him up to public disgrace. For one moment the hero is dejected, and then, recalling his heroic nature, he rises to the height of the situation and stabs himself with a pocket-knife. The bride follows his example, then the rival, then the confidante, then the friend; and the curtain goes down on a scene in the approved tragic manner. The purity of the language, and the exactitude with which not only the French dramas, but the Italian arias, then so much in vogue, were imitated, secured an instant success for this parody, which took a place that it has ever since retained among the classics of its country. The French tragedy fell; an attempt to put Nordahl Brun's *Zarine* on the boards again was a signal failure, and the painted Muse fled back to her own Gallic home. The wonderful promise of *Love without Stockings* was scarcely fulfilled. Wessel wrote nothing more of any great importance, and in a few years both he and Ewald were dead. The death-blow, however, that the first had given to pompous affectation, and the stimulus lent by the second to exalted dramatic writing, brought forward several minor writers, whose very respectable works have scarcely survived them, but who helped to set Danish literature upon a broad and firm basis. The theatre in Kongens Nytorv took a new lease of vitality, and, after expelling the French plays, set itself to turn out a worse cuckoo-fledgling that had made itself a nest there—the Italian Opera. This institution, with all its disagreeable old traditions, with its gang of castrati and all its attendant aliens, pressed hard upon the comfort and welfare of native art, and it was determined to have done with it. The Italians were suddenly sent about their business, and with shrill screams brought news of their discomfiture to Dresden and Cologne. Then for the first time the Royal Theatre found space to breathe, and since then no piece has been performed within its walls in any other language than Danish. When the present writer heard Gluck's opera of *Iphigenia in Tauris* sung there some weeks ago with infinite delicacy and finish, it did not seem to him that any charm was lost through the fact that the libretto was in a language intelligible to all the hearers. To supply the place of the banished Opera, the Danes set about producing lyrical dramas of their own. In the old Hartmann, grandfather to the now living composer of that name, a musician was found whose settings of Ewald have had a truly national importance. The airs from these operas of a hundred years ago live still in the memory of every boy who whistles. From this moment the Royal Theatre passed out of its boyhood into a confident manhood, or at least into an adolescence which lasted without further crisis till 1805.

It was in that year that the young and unknown poet, Adam Öhlenschlæger, wearing out a winter in Germany under all the worst pangs of

nostalgia, found in the University Library at Halle a copy of the Icelandic of Snorro Sturleson's *Heimskringla*. The event was as full of import to Scandinavian literature as Luther's famous discovery of the Bible was to German liberty. In Öhlenschlæger's own words, he read the forgotten classic as one reads a packet of new-found letters from the dearest friend of one's youth; and when he reached Hakon Jarl's *Saga* in his reading, he aid the folio aside, and in a kind of ecstasy sat down to write a tragedy on that subject, which was the firstfruits of a new epoch, and destined to revolutionise poetic literature, not in Denmark only, but throughout the North. To follow the development of Öhlenschlæger's genius would take us too far from our present enquiry, and belongs rather to the history of poetry proper than to that of the Danish theatre. It suffices to point out that the real addition to national dramatic art given by these tragedies was that the whole subject-matter of them was taken from the legendary history of the race. Instead of borrowing themes from Italian romance or German tradition, this poet took his audience back to the springs of their own thought and legend; in the sagas of Iceland he found an infinite store of material for tragic dramas in which to develope emotions kindred to the people in whose language they were clothed, and to teach the unfailing lesson of patriotism to a nation that had almost forgotten its own mediæval glories. In place of the precious sticklers for the unities, Öhlenschlæger set before his eyes Shakespere for a model; but his worship was less blind than that of the German romanticists, and did not lead him into extravagances so wild as theirs. In later years, under the influence of Goethe, he fell into a looser and more florid style, but in his earlier dramas he is, perhaps, the coldest and most severe playwright that has ever succeeded in winning the popular ear. So intent was he on insisting on the heroic, primal forms of life, so careless of what was merely sentiment and adornment, that he presents in one of his most famous tragedies, *Palnatoke*, the unique spectacle of a long drama, in which no female character is introduced. It was not intentionally so; simply Öhlenschlæger forgot to bring a woman into his plot. He rewarded the patience of the public by dedicating his next play, *Axel and Valberg*, entirely to romantic love. The success of this piece on the stage was so great, that, as the poet was away from Copenhagen and wished the printing to be delayed, large sums were given for MS. copies, and a clerk busied himself day after day in writing out the verses for enthusiastic playgoers. As it was seventy years ago with fashionable people, so is it to this day with every youth and maiden. The fame of Öhlenschlæger, like that of Walter Scott amongst ourselves, has broadened and deepened, even while it has somewhat passed out of the recognition of the cultivated classes. It is usual nowadays, in good society, to vote Öhlenschlæger a trifle old-fashioned; but for every thoughtful boy his tragedies are the very basis upon which his first ideas of culture are built up; they are to him the sum and crown of poetry, while all other verses seem but offshoots and imitations; they are to

him what bread is among the necessaries of life. He measures the other poets, that he learns to know, by Öhlenschlæger, but there is no one by whom he dreams of measuring him ; he looks at him as the sun of their planet-circle, and he knows nothing yet of any other solar system. Just as these tragedies are the foundation of a Dane's education, so for the Danish stage they have always been, and will remain, the foundation of everything that the theatre can offer of serious drama, the very corner-stone of the whole edifice ; and, rightly enough, an ambitious actor's first desire is to fit himself for the performance of the heroic parts in these, the manner and style being already traditional. The strings that Öhlenschlæger touched had never before been heard in Denmark ; he led his audience into a world of thought and vision where its feet had never stood before, and he spoke in a language that had never yet been declaimed from behind the footlights. It was not, therefore, wonderful that some years went by before a school of actors arose whose powers were adequate to the burden of these new dramas, and who could be the poet's worthy interpreters. Without such interpreters the tragedies of Öhlenschlæger might have passed from the stage into the library, and their great public function never have been fulfilled. But as early as 1813, in Ryge, a man of superb histrionic genius, an actor was found wholly worthy to bear the weight of such heroic parts as Hakon Jarl and Palnatoke ; some years afterwards Nielsen and his celebrated wife began to share this glory, and the palmy days of Danish acting set in. Fru Nielsen was the Mrs. Siddons of the Danish stage ; in her highly-strong sensibility, native magnificence of manner, and passionate grace, she was exactly suited to give the correct interpreta tion Öhlenschlæger's queenly but rather cold heroines.

The next event in the Royal Theatre was the introduction of Shakespere, but unfortunately he did not arrive alone. The newly-wakened sense for what was lofty and pathetic sought for itself satisfaction in the dreadful dramas of the German *Sturm und Drang Periode*, and threatened to lose its reason completely in the rant and bluster of melodrama. Again the popular sanity was rescued from its perils. We have seen the Danish drama created by the comedies of Holberg, and then fall into the snare of pseudo-classic tragedy ; we have seen it saved from this wrinkled and mincing foe by a single scathing parody, and then fall gradually into a condition of tameness and triviality. Out of this we have seen it suddenly lifted into the zenith of the poetical heavens by the genius of Öhlenschlæger ; and now we find it tottering dizzily, and ready to fall into some humiliating abyss. It does not fall, but is carried lightly down into the atmosphere of common life on the wings of a mild and homely muse. Hitherto the stage had been forced to adapt itself to the poet's caprices ; it found in 1825 a poet who would mould himself to its needs and exigencies. Heiberg understood how to bring all forms of scenic individuality into his service ; for the descendants of Holberg he provided laughter, for the interpreters of Öhlenschlæger parts that displayed the mild enthusiasm of Scandinavian romanticism. Above all he possessed the art of setting

an audience in good humour at the outset; his most serious dramas had some easy-going prologue, in which good, honest Copenhageners found themselves lightly laughed at, and their own darling haunts and habits portrayed with a humour that was wholly sympathetic. And, having at his hand more than one young composer of enthusiasm and talent, he brought music and dancing into his plays in a way that the audience found ravishing, and that filled the house as it had never been filled before. His success combined with it that of his intimate friend, Hertz, whose southern imagination and passion flowed out in plays that brought an element of richness and colour into Danish dramatic art that had always been lacking before. Heiberg's wife became the first actress of her time; and these three friends contrived for a long succession of years to hold the reins in all matters regarding the theatre, and in measure, also, to govern public taste in general questions of art and literature. The two poets are both dead; Fru Heiberg still lives in honoured age, the centre still of a keenly critical circle. The influence of Heiberg and Hertz on popular feeling in Denmark has been extraordinary; in a larger country it could not have been so powerful, being, as it was, almost wholly critical and of a peculiarly delicate type. The average cultivated Dane now-a-days is very much what Heiberg has made him; that is, one of the most refined, fastidious, and superficially-cultivated men of his class in Europe, but wholly incapable of creating new forms of art, and so perfectly satisfied with its past that he has no curiosity for its future. The only new class of drama produced in Denmark in our own time is the farces of Hostrup, pieces that belong to the "cup and saucer" school, and are very much what Robertson would have written, if Robertson had happened to be born a poet. Let us hope that the new house will bring forward new writers, and that the period of lethargy and reaction after the last outburst of poetry is nearly over.

An account of the Danish Royal Theatre would be very imperfect without some notice of a form of art which borrows no aid directly from poetry, but which has developed itself in a quite unique manner at Copenhagen. Already in the middle of the last century, under the direction of Galeotti, the ballet was made a prominent feature on the boards of the Royal Theatre; and from the records of that time we learn that it already began to be regarded with a seriousness that has hardly been afforded to it elsewhere. However, it was not until about fifty years ago that it took the peculiar form which it now holds, and which gives it a national importance. If one can fancy an old Greek in whose brain the harmonious dances of a divine festival still throbbed, waking suddenly to find himself settled in this commonplace century as dancing-master at the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen, one can form some notion of the personality of Bournonville. This poet, to whom the gift of words seems to have been denied, has retained instead the most divine faculty for devising intricate and exquisite dances, and for framing stories of a dramatic kind, in which all the action is performed in dumb show, and consists of a suc-

cession of mingled tableaux and dances. These dumb poems—in the severely intellectual character of which the light and trivial prettiness of what all the rest of Europe calls a ballet is forgotten—are mostly occupied with scenes from the mythology and ancient history of Scandinavia, or else reflect the classicism of Thorwaldsen, with whose spirit Bournonville is deeply imbued. No visitor to Copenhagen should miss the opportunity of seeing one of these beautiful pieces, the best of all, perhaps, being *Thrymsqviden* (the "Lay of Thrym," a giant-king), to which Hartmann has set the wildest, most magical music conceivable. Certain scenes in this ballet remain on the mind as visions of an almost ideal loveliness. The piece is occupied with the last days of the Æsir, the gods of heathen Scandinavia, against whom, it will be remembered, betrayed by Loki, the Evil God, one of themselves, the powers of darkness and chaos rose, and who sank to destruction in the midst of a general conflagration of the universe. When once the natural disappointment that follows the discovery of these colossal figures of the imagination dwarfed to human proportions, the vigour and liveliness of the scenes, the truly poetic conceptions, the grace and originality of the dances, surprise and delight one to the highest degree; and the vivid way in which the dumb poem is made to interpret its own development is worthy of particular attention, the insipidity of ordinary ballet-plots giving all the more piquancy to the interest of this.

It cannot be wholly without value to us to be made aware of the success of other nations in fields where we have been notoriously unsuccessful ourselves. Without falling into any of the jeremiads that have been only too plentiful of late years, we may soberly confess that our own theatres have long ceased to be a school for poetic education, or influential in any way as leaders of popular thought or taste. They have not attempted to claim any moral or political power; they have existed for amusement only, and now, in the eyes of most cultivated persons, they have ceased even to amuse. Over the drop-scene of the Royal Theatre at Copenhagen there stands in large gold letters this inscription: "Ei blot for Lyst"—not merely for enjoyment; and in these simple words may be read the secret of its unique charm and the source of its power. It has succeeded, not prudishly or didactically, but in a broad and healthy spirit, to lead the popular thought in high and ennobling directions. It has not stooped to ask the lowest of its auditors how near the edges of impropriety, how deep into the garbage of vulgarity and slang, how high in the light air of triviality it dared to go; it has not interpreted comedy by farce, not turned tragedy into melodrama, nor dirtied its fingers with burlesque, but has adapted itself as far as possible, meekly and modestly, to the requirements of the chastity of art, and has managed for a century and a half to support a school of original actors and a series of national plays without borrowing traditions or dramas from its neighbours. Denmark is an extremely insignificant country; but that exemplary insect, the ant, is also small, and yet the wisest of men deigned to recommend it to human attention.

Comets' Tails.

When we consider the surprising nature of the phenomena presented by the tails of comets, we can scarcely wonder that the most startling theories have been suggested in explanation. Their whole behaviour is anomalous. The head of a comet, or rather the bright almost point-like nucleus, obeys the law of gravity; and wonderful though the nature of the comet's orbit sometimes is, extending into depths so remote that the mind shrinks from pursuing the comet on its journey through them, there is not a mile of the comet's voyage which does not exemplify in the exactest manner the laws recognised by Newton. But it is quite otherwise with the tail, if we regard the tail as a material object carried along with the comet. The end of the tail, for example, shifts through space with a velocity such as the sun could not possibly generate by his attractive influence, mighty though that influence is, nor control if otherwise generated. Cometic tails are flung forth from the head, or at least appear to be flung forth, with a rapidity far exceeding even the tremendous velocity with which a comet, passing near the sun, sweeps round that orb at the time of nearest approach. Then the varieties of appearance presented by comets' tails, the singular changes of shape in one and the same tail, the existence of more tails than one, and a number of other strange circumstances, seem to defy explanation, and so to invite the wildest speculation.

We propose to consider here some of the more promising attempts which men of science have made to solve the mystery of comets' tails, and to touch also on some ideas which, though advanced by persons more or less distinguished in various departments of science, appear on examination to be untenable.

It is manifest that if we would form a just theory of cometic appendages, we must pay special attention to their more remarkable characteristics, because in this way we shall be able to get rid of innumerable theories, accounting fairly enough for ordinary appearances, but irreconcilable with those of a less usual nature. But we must also closely consider those features which, though usual with the objects we are considering, are remarkable in the sense that they distinguish these objects from others.

Take, then, first of all the fact that ordinarily the tail of a comet extends from the head in a direction almost exactly opposite to that in which the sun lies, or, in fact, has very nearly the position which the shadow of the head would have if a comet were of such a nature as to cast a shadow outwards into space. Being luminous, instead of dark,

a comet's tail has been described on account of this peculiarity as a *negative shadow*.

If comets' tails were always of moderate dimensions, we might readily enough conceive that their position was not inconsistent with the supposition that they are material appendages, unchanging in constitution though changing in position. Some form of repulsion exerted by the sun on such appendages might (after the manner seen in certain electrical experiments) keep them always streaming out on the side farthest from him.

But the enormous dimensions of cometic tails, as well as their wonderfully rapid formation, extension, and changes of figure, will not permit us to adopt such a theory for an instant. The consideration of a single instance will show conclusively that a comet's tail must be otherwise explained. We take, as one of the most remarkable cases of the kind, the comet of 1680. This comet was invisible for four days during the time of its nearest approach to the sun. All this time it was circling rapidly round; in other words, it was swiftly changing its direction of motion, and its position with respect to the sun. When it first became visible after this rapid movement it was passing away from the sun in a course nearly opposite in direction from that by which it had arrived. And now, *carried in front* of the retreating comet, was a tail more than ninety millions of miles in length. So far as appearances were concerned this tail was the same with which the comet had approached the sun, only it seemed to have been carried almost completely round until now it had nearly the same direction as it had when the comet was approaching the sun. But it could not really have been brandished round in this way, simply because the course which, on this supposition, the end of the tail would have had to follow, would have required a velocity of motion incomparably exceeding any which the sun's attraction could account for. Moreover, a material tail of such dimensions, even though composed of a substance millions of times stronger than steel, would have been rent into fragments by the tremendous forces called into play in a whirling motion of the kind. Knowing, as we do, that the tail of a comet has hardly any substance at all, insomuch that, despite its enormous volume, it produces no disturbing effect by its attraction even on the smallest members of the solar system, we see how utterly incapable so tenuous a tail would be to bear the strain resulting from the imagined motion. In reality, however, the supposition is one which does not need serious refutation.

But if we suppose, as we seem forced to do, that this tremendous tail, seen after the comet had swept around the sun, was a *new* formation, swept out into its observed position by some mighty repulsive force exerted by the sun, we must adopt the most startling conceptions of the activity of that force. Under gravity the comet's nucleus, although when approaching the sun it arrived at the earth's distance from that orb with a velocity of about twenty-five miles per second, required four more

weeks to complete its journey to the point of nearest approach; whereas here was a tail equal in length to the earth's distance from the sun flung forth in less than four days. Nay, from the observed direction of the tail and its subsequent changes of position, it became manifest that a few hours had sufficed to carry the material of its extremity (on the repulsion theory) from the nucleus to that distant position.

It was in order to get over this difficulty that Professor Tait devised the "sea-bird theory" of comets' tails. If we watch a flight of birds travelling nearly in a plane, at a great distance, we notice that when the eye is nearly in the level of the plane, the flight appears like a well-defined streak above the horizon; but if the plane is so situated that the eye is above or below its level, the flight of birds can hardly be discerned at all. Another phenomenon more frequently observed may also serve to illustrate Professor Tait's theory. We may often see a long, straight, and well-defined cloud towards the horizon which is really the edge-view of a thin, flat cloud of fleecy structure, as we may see by comparing it with others seen above it higher and higher, even to the part of the sky overhead where we look directly through the thinnest part of such clouds. Comparing the dense-looking though narrow cloud on the horizon with the filmy appearance of the cloud overhead, one would not suppose the two could be alike in structure, were it not for the gradual change of appearance of the intermediate clouds as we direct the sight from the horizon upwards. The clouds illustrate what Professor Tait says as to the difference of visibility between an edge-view and a thwart-view of a plane of discrete bodies like his sea-birds. But we must return to the birds themselves to understand his actual application of the phenomenon. It will sometimes happen that a flight of birds viewed athwart will, by a slight and rapidly effected change of position, present the edge-view, and thus change in a few moments from an indistinct cloudlike aspect to the appearance of a sharply defined and heavy streak upon the sky; or, a flight of birds absolutely invisible in the former position, may thus become in a few moments clearly visible, and extending to a great apparent length.

Professor Tait considers that a tail like that of Newton's comet, instead of being thrown out in a few hours as had been supposed on the repulsion theory, may simply have become visible in the manner of a flight of sea-birds travelling as just described.

When we remember that Professor Sir W. Thomson, when President of the British Association at Edinburgh, spoke enthusiastically of the simplicity and beauty of Tait's sea-bird theory, Tait being on that occasion President of the Section of Physical Science and Mathematics; and when we further remember that both Thomson and Tait are deservedly eminent for their skill in mathematics (the very soul, as it were, of astronomy), we are unable to receive otherwise than respectfully a theory so strongly supported by authority. And yet this theory is so utterly unsupported by evidence from the observed appearance or behaviour of

comets, that we are compelled to regard its invention by Tait, and its acceptance by Thomson, as having little relation to the actual subject of cometic astronomy. All that can be admitted is indeed simply all that Professor Tait has attempted to show. Given a shoal of meteors ninety millions of miles long and viewed slightly athwart, the shoal, invisible as so situated, might in a few hours become visible along its whole length, and its rapid apparition would correspond with the apparently rapid formation of the tail of Newton's comet after the comet had been circling close around the sun. But how the shoal of meteors came at this time to be in front of the comet, whereas on the sea-bird theory the comet had approached the sun with a shoal of meteors extending millions of miles behind it; why the shoal was visible all the time that the comet was visible both in approaching and in receding; why this edge-view of a shoal was millions of miles thick and utterly unlike such a shoal on any conceivable supposition as to its structure;—these, and a hundred other such questions suggested by the different, the changing, and the complex appearances presented by various comets, find no answer in the sea-bird theory. Until some attempt has been made to reconcile this theory with these peculiarities, the theory can hardly be regarded as seriously advanced. In the meantime we venture to say that no shoal of meteors can be made to account for the appearances presented by comets' tails under any amount of mathematical manipulation.

But there is something so startling in the conception of a repulsive energy competent to account for the formation of comets' tails, that one naturally seeks for any explanation which may account for the phenomena without forcing upon us the idea of so amazing a force. Especially is this the case when we consider that, on the theory of repulsion, the old tails, enormous though their dimensions are, must be regarded as continually dissipated into space; so that we have to suppose a series of tails, each many millions of miles in length, and of vast breadth and thickness, all formed from out of the substance of the comet, and swept for ever away from it. It is easy indeed to speak of the retreating comet gathering its substance together when once beyond the domain of the sun's repulsive power; but the velocity with which that substance is swept away is such as not even the sun himself could overcome by his attractive energy: much less could the feebly attracting head of a comet draw back the stragglers which the sun's repulsion had (on this theory) hurried away into surrounding space.

We can understand, then, that students of astronomy, observing the fact that the comet's tail is directed from the sun, much as a shadow would be, should be led again and again to discuss the inviting theory that the tail is a species of negative shadow. This theory has commonly been presented somewhat on this wise:—The head of a comet is regarded as acting the part of a lens, in such sort that the sun's light is poured into the region behind the comet more richly than elsewhere. Now, if this region were absolutely vacant, the light thus streaming behind the

comet would produce no visible effect: it would illuminate any material substance which happened to be there; but if there was nothing there, then the blackness of interstellar space would prevail in this region as elsewhere. Accordingly the lens theory of comets requires that some matter should be supposed to exist behind the comet (considering the sun as in front); and as the comet takes up in succession many different positions with respect to the sun, we require to have matter all round the comet's head to a distance equal to the observed length of the tail. Either we must regard this matter as belonging to the comet, or as belonging to the solar system. If we take the former view, we should have to suppose that many comets have had the most astonishing dimensions. Newton's, for example, must have been nearly 200 millions of miles in diameter. This is not merely incredible, but impossible, because there would be nothing to retain this enormous sphere of tenuous matter around the central nucleus except the attraction of the nucleus, which we know to be exceedingly feeble from the fact that the smallest planets and satellites are in no way disturbed even by the near approach of the largest comets. Taking Newton's comet, the nucleus of which came within less than a quarter of million of miles of the sun, there was the sun himself at this time in the very heart of the enormous sphere of matter over which the utterly insignificant mass of the nucleus is supposed on the lens theory to have borne sway. The comet could never have carried away from the sun's neighbourhood its attendant sphere of matter.

Much more conceivable is the theory that the matter illuminated by the light streaming behind the comet belongs to the sun's domain, and is always present ready to be illuminated so soon as a comet-lens comes into a suitable position. But in reality the known laws of optics present overwhelming objections against this inviting theory. Supposing for a moment that a comet were able to condense the light behind it in the particular manner which the theory requires, the light thus streaming backwards would form a perfectly straight tail. For although a series of bodies continually setting out from the comet at a moderate velocity in a direction away from the sun would form a curved tail, simply because the comet is all the time moving onwards upon a curved path, yet light travels with such enormous velocity that the longest cometic tail ever seen would be traversed in a few minutes, and in so short a time the comet would not have advanced appreciably on its curved path.* There would not be the slightest visible curvature, therefore, in the tail. If this reasoning seem unsatisfactory to the reader, without diagrams and elaborate explanations, then let him consider the simple fact that comets have had more tails than one, and tails quite differently shaped and placed (a strongly curved tail side by side with one or two perfectly straight tails): this circumstance is manifestly sufficient to overthrow the lens theory of comets' tails.

* It would have advanced many thousand of miles, no doubt, but the direction of its motion would not change appreciably. Though the earth travels 60,000 miles an hour, it takes a whole day to change the direction of her motion a single degree.

Professor Tyndall was led by his researches upon light to a theory somewhat similar to the lens theory, but altogether better worthy of careful consideration.

He had noticed during his experiments on the chemical action of light that almost infinitesimal amounts of matter when diffused in the form of a cloud can "discharge from it by reflection" an astonishing body of light. Let us first understand the exceeding minuteness of the quantities of matter employed in Tyndall's experiments. Having first assured himself of the perfect purity of the tube (3 feet long by 3 inches wide), by so cleansing it that when filled with air, or the vapour of aqueous hydrochloric acid, the most intense light falling on it would not produce the least cloudiness, he proceeded as follows:—"I took," he says, "a small bit of bibulous paper, rolled it up into a pellet not the fourth part of the size of a small pea, and moistened it with a liquid possessing a higher boiling-point than that of water. I held the pellet in my fingers until it had become almost dry, then introduced it into" a small pipe serving for the introduction of gas into the main tube, "and allowed dry air to pass over it into this tube. The air charged with the modicum of vapour thus taken up was subjected to the action of light. A blue actinic cloud began to form immediately, and in five minutes the blue colour had extended quite through the experimental tube. For some minutes this cloud continued blue. . . . but at the end of fifteen minutes a dense white cloud filled the tube. Considering the amount of vapour carried in by the air, the appearance of a cloud so massive and luminous seemed like the creation of a world out of nothing."

But this was far from being all. Minute as was the quantity of light-generating vapour now present in the tube, it was largely reduced before the next experiment was made. "The pellet of bibulous paper was removed and the experimental tube was cleared out by sweeping a current of dry air through it. *This current passed also through the connecting piece in which the pellet of bibulous paper had rested.* The air was at length cut off and the experimental tube exhausted." Then the tube was again filled by the vapour of hydrochloric acid, which had passed through the connecting piece. Now let it be noted how exceedingly, almost infinitesimally, minute was the quantity of light-generating matter remaining in the tube. For, first, the pellet of bibulous paper had absorbed but a minute quantity of liquid; secondly, nearly the whole of what had been absorbed had been allowed to evaporate before the pellet was put into the connecting piece; and, lastly, "the pellet had been ejected, and the tube in which it rested had been for some minutes the conduit of a strong current of pure air." The matter now to be experimented upon was "part of such a residue as could linger in the connecting piece after this process," and had been now carried into the 3-feet tube by the hydrochloric acid. Yet the effects were remarkable when the electric lamp was allowed to pour its light upon the tube. "One minute after the ignition of the lamp," says Tyndall, "a faint cloud showed itself; in two minutes it had filled all the anterior portion of the tube and stretched a considerable way down it; it

developed itself afterwards into a very beautiful cloud-figure; and at the end of fifteen minutes the body of light discharged by the cloud, considering the amount of matter involved in its production, was simply astounding. But, though thus luminous, the cloud was far too fine to dim in any appreciable degree objects placed behind it. The flame of a candle seemed no more affected by it than it would be by a vacuum. Placing a table of print so that it might be illuminated by the cloud itself, it could be read *through* the cloud without any sensible enfeeblement. Nothing could more perfectly illustrate that 'spiritual texture' which Sir John Herschel ascribes to a comet than these actinic clouds. Indeed the experiments prove that matter of almost infinite tenuity is competent to shed forth light far more intense than that of the tail of comets. The weight of the matter which sent this body of light to the eye would probably have to be multiplied by millions to bring it up to the weight of the air in which it hung."

It may fairly be said that Tyndall's luminous cloud is the only terrestrial object yet known to physicists which fairly illustrates the phenomena presented by comets' tails as respects their extreme tenuity and the quantity of light they nevertheless discharge. This is a somewhat important point in any theory of these mysterious objects, and it does not appear to us that astronomers (who have not been altogether successful in determining the nature of comets from their telescopic researches) ought to look askance at physical facts which strikingly illustrate cometic phenomena, merely because those facts were not discovered with a telescope.

Let us see, however, how Tyndall associates his actinic clouds with comets and their appendages.

After briefly describing the difficulties which surround cometic phenomena, he proceeds to present "a speculation which seems to do away with all these difficulties, and which, whether it presents a physical verity or not, ties together the phenomena exhibited by comets" (he should rather have said, *many* of the phenomena) "in a remarkably satisfactory way:—The theory is, that a comet is composed of vapour decomposable by the solar light, the visible head and tail being an actinic cloud resulting from such decomposition; the texture of actinic clouds is demonstrably that of a comet. The tail is not projected matter, but matter precipitated on the solar beams traversing the cometary atmosphere. *It can be proved by experiment that this precipitation may occur either with comparative slowness along the beam, or that it may be practically momentary throughout the entire length of the beam. . . . As the comet wheels round . . .* the tail is not composed throughout of the same matter, but of new matter precipitated on the solar beams, which cross the cometary atmosphere in new directions. . . . The tail is always turned from the sun for the following reason:—Two antagonistic powers are brought to bear upon the cometary vapour—the one" a chemical power tending to form the invisible cloud, the other a heating power tending to dissipate it into invisible vapour. "As a matter of fact, the sun emits the two agents

here involved. There is nothing hypothetical in the assumption of their existence." That visible cloud should be formed behind the head, or in the space occupied by the head's shadow, it is only necessary to assume that the sun's heating rays are absorbed more copiously by the head than the chemical rays. This augments the relative superiority of the chemical rays behind the head, and enables them to form the visible cloud which constitutes the tail. The old tail, so soon as the head by its onward motion ceases to screen it, is dissipated by the sun's heat. *The dissipation, like the formation, not being instantaneous, the curvature of the tail and the direction of the curvature are accounted for.* Other peculiarities are shown to be explicable by the theory; and, in particular, Tyndall remarks that "the cometary envelopes and various other appearances may be accurately reproduced through the agency of cyclonic movements introduced by heat among" the chemical clouds with which the theory has to deal.*

There are many strong points in this theory, and it shows to great advantage, in particular, by comparison with the theory which, as we have seen, found special favour with mathematicians—the sea-bird theory. It not only explained the facts which had suggested it, but was shown by its author to accord with many characteristics of comets, some among them being such as had been long regarded as most perplexing.

A comet, however, which astronomers were able to study more thoroughly than any other ever known seems to us to have afforded decisive evidence in favour of the repulsion theory of comets' tails, and against the ingenious theory just described. We refer to Donati's comet, or the comet of 1858-59.

This remarkable object, like most large comets, presented the appearance of concentric envelopes around the head. These were apparently raised by the sun's heat, and each, after being formed, rose gradually farther and farther from the nucleus, being succeeded, after it had reached a certain distance, by another envelope, this by another, and so on; so that at the time of greatest development three well-marked envelopes were simultaneously visible, besides the gradually fading remnants of two or three others. The great curved tail which formed so remarkable a feature of that comet presented the usual appearance of being formed by the sweeping away of the outer parts of the envelope by a solar repulsive force; and its well-marked curvature showed that if such a

* The following remarks by Tyndall suggest strange possibilities:—"There may be comets," he says, "whose vapour is undecomposable by the sun, or which, if decomposed, is not precipitated. This view opens out the possibility of invisible comets wandering through space, perhaps sweeping over the earth and affecting its sanitary condition without our being otherwise conscious of their passage. As regards tenuity, I entertain a strong persuasion that out of a few ounces (the possible weight assigned by Sir John Herschel to certain comets) of iodide of allyl vapour, an actinic cloud of the magnitude and luminousness of Donati's comet might be manufactured."

repulsive force had really acted, the rate at which it swept the matter of the tail outwards, though very rapid, was by no means so rapid as the motion of light. The tail visible at any given time (during the chief splendour of the comet) was the work of several days, not of a few minutes, whether the repulsion theory or Tyndall's were the true explanation. But now, as if to illustrate what Tyndall says of the various rates at which the chemical cloud may be formed and dissipated (see the last two italicised passages in our account of his theory), a straight tail became visible beside the curved one. It was not visible in England, but was well seen in America. This, of course, was in agreement with the repulsion theory also, since it only required that the comet's head should be regarded as consisting of two kinds of matter, one kind undergoing repulsion with exceeding swiftness, so as to form the straight tail, the other repelled with a more moderate velocity, and so forming the curved tail.

So far, then, there was no special reason for preferring either theory. But now a circumstance was noted which, so far as we can see, the repulsion theory is alone competent to explain. We must note that the reasoning which follows, though it presented itself independently to the present writer, was long before adduced by Professor Norton, of Yale College, in America, the well-known author of the auroral theory of the solar corona. The great mass of the matter undergoing repulsion was carried into the large, bright, curved tail. We can conceive that in thus moving off, this matter, being so much greater in quantity, would be apt to carry off along with it, and, as it were, entangled in its substance, portions of the matter which should have gone into the small tail—the matter, namely, on which the sun's repulsive action was able to act more swiftly, sweeping it out into straight lines. The matter thus carried away into the wrong tail, as it were, would be always ready to escape from the entanglement so soon as the matter which had carried it off began, through wide spreading, to leave it free. And then at once the sun's repulsive action would act upon this matter precisely as on the matter of the same kind forming the straight tail; it would repel this matter, which had escaped from the entangling matter of the curved tail, and sweep it away in a straight line, so that it would form, as it were, a sort of subsidiary tail, not extending from the head, but from a particular part of the curved tail. This happening from time to time, the curved tail would manifestly have a number of straight tails, or streamers, all extending on the same side of it as the straight tail which streamed from the head. Now this was precisely the appearance presented by the curved tail of Donati's comet—a sort of combing out, or striation, the direction of the different streamers corresponding exactly with that which would result from the mode of formation just described.

It is difficult to see how Tyndall's theory can be reconciled with this peculiarity of appearance. For, if we regard the straight tail as formed by the sun's chemical rays, a portion of his heat rays being absorbed by

the action of part of the head, it would be necessary to suppose that the other straight tails—the streamers, that is, from the great curved tail—were similarly formed. If this were so, then at various points along the length of the curved tail there must have been matter of the same nature as that matter in the head to which the chief straight tail is attributed. But this looks very like admitting that the great tail consisted partially of matter repelled from the head; and if we admit repulsion at all, we may as well admit it as entirely operative. We are not indeed bound to do so; in fact, in our opinion, one of the most serious mistakes which modern theorisers in all departments of science are apt to make is, the endeavour to explain phenomena as due to one or other of two or more causes, when in reality both causes or several may be in operation. Still it is manifest that, in the present case, the only positive evidence is in favour of the repulsion theory, since, starting even from Tyndall's theory, we find evidence of the repulsion of matter from the head into the great curved tail.

We have said nothing here of the meteoric theory of comets *, because, so far as is known, it is the head only of comets to which that theory applies. It is known that meteors follow in the track of the head, that is, in the same orbit; but the tail does not at any time agree in position with the orbit, and we have no sufficient reason from observation to suppose that the tail consists of meteoric matter, although of course it is quite possible that the repulsion by which the tail seems to be formed may carry into the tail matter of the same sort as that out of which the meteoric attendants are formed.

The observations made with the spectroscope and with the polariscope upon the comet which so lately adorned our skies have not thrown any noteworthy light on the subject. It has been shown that part of the light of the tail gives the same spectrum as the small comets heretofore observed—a spectrum somewhat hastily associated with that of carbon—and that part of the light is probably reflected sun-light. But the observations have been imperfect and unsatisfactory.

We may still say, as Sir John Herschel long since said,—"There is, beyond question, some profound secret and mystery of nature concerned in the phenomena of comets' tails. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that future observation, borrowing every aid from rational speculation, grounded on the progress of physical science generally (especially those branches of it which relate to the ethereal or imponderable elements), may ere long enable us to penetrate this mystery, and to declare whether it is really *matter*, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, which is projected from their heads with such extravagant velocity, and if not impelled, at least directed in its course by a reference to the sun as its point of avoidance."

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* This theory has been very fully dealt with in former volumes of this magazine.

A Witch Trial in the Fourteenth Century.

In this paper we intend to follow the course which the trial actually took. Perhaps it would be possible to improve the story it tells by throwing it into another shape. But it is also possible that such a process might effectually destroy its value as an illustration of manners and superstition five hundred years ago.

We will suppose that our readers have paid a visit to the Châtelet—the Old Bailey of Paris—on Saturday, the 30th of July, 1390. Originally erected as a tête de pont, to cover the entrance of the city by way of the Bridge au Change, it consisted of a square keep, with turrets at the angles. Through its centre, straight to the bridge, ran a narrow passage, with heavy gates at its extremities. The last crumbling remains of the Châtelet were removed in 1792. But four hundred years earlier, though it was then so ancient that the date of its foundation had passed out of memory, it was still formidable. Like many another old fortification, the course of time, in removing it from the outskirts of the city to the centre, had turned it into a prison. Having surveyed its massy walls and grim old battlements, we penetrate through a number of gloomy corridors to the Grièche, or woman's cell. It is a low vaulted chamber of considerable extent—dim, damp, and unclean exceedingly. It has no furniture: a stone bench which runs round it serves as a seat by day and a couch by night. And yet this miserable lodging must be paid for, at the rate of two deniers a night, by those who cannot or will not pay a great deal more for accommodation hardly superior elsewhere. The authorities do not provide the prisoners with food. Of this, however, there is seldom any scarcity. Commiseration for the captive is one of the foremost duties inculcated by mediæval religion, and the bags which hang from the gratings of the Châtelet are filled daily with the contributions of the charitable. Besides, it is so common for the conscientious to traverse the city, at stated times, in search of alms for those in durance, that contemporary satire has seized upon the practice as one of the many characteristics of hypocrisy.

The prisoners in the Grièche are variously occupied. Some exchange blows, for here not only do they quarrel, but not unfrequently carry their contention to a fatal close. Some merely exchange coarse epithets. Some carouse, for here money will procure anything. And some—yoke-fellows in iniquity these—arrange their defence, and discuss the probabilities of conviction. The last is the occupation of the two committed on the charge of bewitching and poisoning Hainsellin Planete and his wife,

Agnesot, of the Rue des Fosses St. Germain. One of the two, Margot de la Barre, *alias* du Coignet, is a hard-featured, determined-looking woman, between fifty and sixty, who, previous to her incarceration, kept a tavern of no good repute in the Rue Froidmantel, a street in the vicinity of the Louvre, as indeed are all the streets mentioned in this trial. The other, Marion la Droituriere, *alias* l'Estallée, is less than half the age of her companion, but of quite another exterior, being remarkably tall and thin. It is evident that she has been a gaudy bird at no distant date; but imprisonment has stripped off much of her gay plumage, and sorely bedraggled the rest. She is by profession what we would term "an unfortunate"—one of the highest class, however, being a member of a singular body attached to the French court.

The gaolers appear, and Margot is led up to the hall of judgment. On this occasion the court is composed of the Provost of the Châtelet, his lieutenant, his auditor, the King's advocate, and six other personages learned in the law, termed examiners. The preliminary formalities are gone through and the trial begins. Margot is questioned on oath respecting her former life. She replies that she was born in the town of Beaune, in the Gastenois — that for many a year she had led a vagabond and an immoral life, "sometimes in one town, sometimes in another," settling eventually in the Rue Froidmantel. We may add what was elicited bit by bit in the course of the trial, that during the latter portion of her career, the professions of sorceress, quack, and not improbably poisoner, had been conjoined to that of keeper of a house of dubious repute. Concerning the bewitchment of Planete and his wife she explains that the man was an old acquaintance, in the habit of frequenting her tavern with l'Estallée, his *amie*, up almost to the day of his marriage—an event which had taken place but a few weeks previous to the trial. "Immediately after the wedding," she goes on to relate, "I was informed by mutual friends that Agnesot was afflicted with a disease which caused her brain to exude through her eyes, nose, and mouth, and I was requested to do something for the poor woman. Then I bethought me of a certain secret which my mother had taught me in my youth, and I told these people that, with God to aid, I would soon relieve her. Taking a garland, composed of herbs which I had purchased on the eve of St. John last past, I went to the Rue des Fosses St. Germain. On the way I paused to gather a bunch of shepherd's-purse,* which I saw growing near the hostelry of Alençon, close by the Louvre, and which I twined in the garland as I went. Admitted to the bedside of Agnesot, I acquainted myself, as well as I could, with her malady. Then I said to her, '*Mon amie*, I gave you no garland for your wedding-day, but I give you one now, and I assure you that you could not wear a better one. It is a garland to unbewitch yourself, or any other person upon whom a

* The weed named was a noted ingredient in witch preparations. Aware of this, Margot endeavoured to give its appearance in her garland the seeming of accident.

spell has been laid.' So saying, I twined the garland round her head, outside her cap. Then I repeated three *paters*, and as many *aves*, and crossed her in the name of the Trinity. Afterwards I said, 'Twice have I cast a blight upon you, and thrice do I remove it, in the name of the Trinity!'" The last sentence was a damning admission.

Concerning Hainsellin, she told that some days preceding her visit to his wife he had called at her tavern to request assistance for himself, who was then suffering from "fevers," and that, for the sake of old acquaintance, she had furnished him with a charm composed of shepherd's-purse, wrapt up in a white rag, which she directed him to carry on his person, promising that it would secure his recovery within eleven days.

To further questions she replied that she was totally ignorant of the art of witchcraft. When reminded of an admission made by her during the examination preceding her committal for trial, she denied, in the strongest manner, having ever said that she knew Agnesot to be spell-bound, or having made any remark at all concerning her, save that, within three or four days of putting on the wreath, a notable change would take place in her health.

Having heard all that Margot thought fit to state, the judges consulted thereupon. Then, "duly considering her former life, the contradictions between her various statements, the suspicious herbs found in her possession, the absurdity of a person pretending to reverse a spell who did not know how to impose it, and the extraordinary admission contained in her version of the formula which she had used when placing the garland on the head of Agnesot—they decided that, in the interests of truth and justice, it was necessary to put her to the question."

The last paragraph, which we have borrowed pretty exactly from the record, reads very legal and logical. But, we beg to assure our readers that it meant absolutely nothing. We have gone over nearly a hundred reports of trials which took place at the Châtelet about this period, without finding a single instance in which resort was not had to the question.

Margot was put to the question forthwith, "on the little bed and the great one," but not another word could be drawn from her. She was then released, chafed, as usual, in the kitchen, and then relegated to her cell. So far she had reason to consider herself safe. There was no decisive evidence against her. She thought she could trust her accomplice to keep silence, and the old sinner had not the smallest doubt concerning her own firmness.

On Monday, August the 1st, the court reassembled. There were present six members, two of whom had not appeared at the former sitting. This time l'Estallée was produced for examination, and with her several dumb but rather dangerous witnesses, consisting of one or two dried herbs, a piece of moss, and a lock of hair, which had been found in her box. She, too, was required to give an account of her former life in the first instance. The moss, she stated, had been given her as a

souvenir by a former paramour, an English squire, who had gathered it with his own hands by the brink of a well where, according to tradition, a virgin had been beheaded. It was supposed to contain certain mystic virtues, and in return therefor she had given the squire a lock of her hair, for which scarcely as much could be said. One would have thought that such a token was hardly of the kind to pass between people like these; but such were the good old times.

Concerning Hainsellin, l'Estallée was sufficiently diffuse. She declared without the smallest reserve, or regard for womanly or legal decorum, and to the very beards of those "most potent, grave, and reverend signiors," that she had loved, still loved, and would continue to love him better than any man in the world, and, as she added with vehement passion, "better than any man that ever could be born into the world." The tuft of hair was his. Once on a time when he was leaving her, as she thought, far too soon, she tried to arrest him in a playful way. She seized his hood by one of the corners: he pulled against her, and thus the thing was torn off, and with it these hairs. He escaped for the time; but she wrapped up the hairs in the fragment of red cloth, and put the packet away among the things which she valued most.

She denied that she had ever gathered any herbs for magical purposes, or that she had ever uttered a threat concerning Hainsellin. She admitted that his marriage had grieved her exceedingly—more, far more, than anything that had ever before befallen her. And she admitted having said that he would have reason to rue the day—not as a threat, but because she knew full well that never, never more would he find any woman in this world to sacrifice herself for him as she had done. This was all that she had to say, and she was sent back to her cell.

The court was by this time increased to eleven—the five fresh members probably having been all attracted to the Châtelet by the unusual interest which the trial began to assume. A good deal of discussion among the judges followed the departure of Marion. Its very length shows that it was not altogether unfavourable to her. In the end it was decided that she, too, should be put to the torture, but not until Margot had been subjected thereto a second time. The crone therefore was summoned, and stretched on the rack. But the stern persuasions of the small bed and the great one had not the smallest effect on her obstinacy. So ended the doings of the day.

There was no court on Tuesday; but on Wednesday, the 3rd of August, its members assembled to the number of seven, and Marion was led before it. The proceedings opened with a little "scene." When the principal torturer, Oudin de Rochefort, seized the woman to prepare her for the iron couch, she burst from his grasp, and treated the worshipful magistrates to not a little of her mind. She warned them, with suitable gestures and interjections, to "mind what they were about in dealing thus with a woman of good fame." She declared, with deep earnestness, that she was entirely ignorant of the charges brought against

her. And she closed as neat an oration as was ever delivered under such circumstances, with an appeal to the Court of Parliament.

Such an appeal, even from such lips, was not to be disregarded. The work of torture was suspended, and notice of the appeal was transmitted to the body concerned, which, as it happened, was sitting at that moment. The message received prompt attention, and the messengers—the honourable and learned Master Pierre Lesclot, and the merely learned Master Guillaume Porel—both members of the Court of Parliament, as well as of the Court of the Châtelet—were sent back on the instant, with full powers to decide as to the validity of the appeal. So quickly was all this done, that the examination was resumed and carried through the remainder of the stage that same day. Clearly old French law had not yet put on those tedious forms of which Hamlet complains so bitterly.

Her appeal being disallowed, Marion was placed on the rack—but no further confession could be drawn from her. She was then removed, and Margot was brought up from the Grièche, and tortured for the third time. The old tavern-keeper, however, proved no more yielding than heretofore, and the court adjourned.

The next day l'Estallée was ordered to be questioned by water. This torture was much the same in 1890 as when it was witnessed by Evelyn, in the same place, in 1651. Here, according to the diarist of Say's Court, the wrists of the malefactor were bound with a strong rope, or small cable, to an iron ring in the wall, about four feet from the floor. Then his feet were fastened with another cable "about five foot farther than his utmost length, to another ring on the floor of the room. Thus suspended, yet lying but aslant, they slid an horse of wood under the rope that bound his feet, which so exceedingly stiffened it, as served the fellow's joints in miserable sort, drawing him out at length in an extraordinary manner, he having only a pair of linen drawers on his naked body. Then they questioned, which not confessing, they put a higher horse under the rope, to increase the torture and extension. In this agony, confessing nothing, the executioner with a horn—just such as they drench horses with—stuck the end of it into his mouth, and poured the quantity of two buckets of water down his throat and over him, which so prodigiously swelled him, as would have pitied and affrighted any one to see. . . . It represented to me the intolerable sufferings which our Blessed Saviour must needs undergo when His body was hanging with all its weight upon the Cross." The torture thus faithfully described was so terrible that few ever endured it beyond the first stage, and so it happened in this instance. Before a single drop of water could be poured upon her Marion was vanquished by her sufferings, and entreated to be released, promising to tell all. Her desire was complied with. "Then," writes the greffier, with nauseous affectation of mildness, "without the slightest constraint of the gehenne"—the appropriate name by which judicial torture was known—"she confessed all that she had ever practised of philtre or witchcraft."

Four months, or thereabouts, before, she and Marion la Dayme, a Fleming, and a daughter of sin like herself, "being together drinking and discoursing of their lovers," she, l'Estallée, held forth in praise of Hainsellin as the dearest, tenderest, most loveable sweetheart in the world. La Dayme was equally warm in eulogising one Jehan de Savoy, who held the honourable post of tailor to the Duchess of Touraine. As thus they conversed, the Fleming communicated a secret whereby a lover might be made more loving. The greffier has given it at full length, and, like other such secrets, it is perfectly vile and disgusting. But l'Estallée was a daughter of sin, and besides infatuated to insanity with Hainsellin. She therefore put it immediately in practice, though with the utmost fairness, since she applied it to herself also. Thus she gave good proof of the excess of passion that possessed her—by desiring to render it still more excessive. The utter worthlessness of the stuff was soon apparent. In a day or two it came to her knowledge that Hainsellin was affianced to another; and worse still, that the wedding-day was at hand. Then she hastened to la Barre—the prime confidante of this, the amour of her life—in a state of frenzy. The hag attempted to soothe her with old saws—dwelling especially on one which said that no good ever came of a marriage between two ribalds,* from which it would seem that Hainsellin had promised to wed his *amie*. As usual, wise saw failed to curb wild passion, and the tavern-keeper was compelled to resort to another device. Binding the furious woman by oath on oath—never to breathe a syllable of the secret about to be disclosed, she whispered that she was well acquainted with an art greatly dreaded in those strange times. She went on to mutter that she was willing to exercise it in Marion's favour, somewhat in pity, but more in friendship, and, as it proved, a little for reward. Before, however, proceeding to such an extremity, Margot advised her client to try a mode of recalling truant lovers to their allegiance, which, as she asseverated, she had never known to fail. It consisted of a powder, absurdly composed, part of which was to be mixed with wine, and part wrapt up in a down pillow. Of the wine the lovers were to partake. As to the pillow, it was to be reserved for Hainsellin's use alone, for the touch of a female cheek would quite dispel its virtues. L'Estallée observed the directions very exactly. And Hainsellin gave her full opportunity: for, with unutterable meanness, this consummate sneak kept up his acquaintance with the ribald to the very last. "But," sighed the impassioned girl, "this philtre proved as useless as the other. I saw very clearly that Hainsellin loved just as ever, and not a particle more fondly."

Then l'Estallée went on to speak of the wreath—or rather wreaths, for there had been two. Visiting the market on the eve of St. John to purchase some roses *d'oultre mer*, and some other flowers, "wherewith to decorate her person, as was the custom of young women at that season," she bought, among the rest, a bunch of that weed of dark repute, shep-

* "Peu de gents ont espousé des amies, qui ne s'en soyent repentis."—*Montaigne.*

herd's-purse. On her return from the market she called, as usual, at the tavern. Then Margot observed the shepherd's-purse, and said that, by its means, she could work in such form as should cause Hainsellin to abandon the wife he was about to wed, and return to Marion. The weed we need hardly say at once changed hands, and a bargain was struck. The beldame promised to weave the shepherd's-purse into two garlands, one for the bridegroom and the other for the bride, which would certainly effect the purpose which l'Estallée had so much at heart.

At last arrived the week preceding Hainsellin's wedding. It was fixed for the Sunday, and on the Thursday or Friday before, she could not well remember which, Marion called on her friend. Margot bade her hope on, repeated her promise respecting the garlands, renewed the oaths to secresy of the unhappy ribald, and imposed another to the effect that she would bring as many customers as she could to the tavern. Then she whispered that the garlands would be ready on the Sunday, when Marion would receive them, along with ample directions for their use.

Here, as often in the course of this report, the dull, dry greffier becomes a most attractive story teller. It is unintentionally indeed; he merely gives the more important items of the evidence in the usual matter-of-fact style of such people. But the details, like all those into which human feeling enters deeply, possess an interest of their own which needs no aid from the artifices of style.

The confession went on to relate—how on the morning of the Sunday, when her *amie* was to wed, Marion rose early—how, sitting sadly by her lattice, she saw Hainsellin pass and saluted him—how, when the marriage hour drew nigh, she felt constrained to go and witness the procession on its way to church—how she followed it thither, and remained, with what feeling we shall not attempt to guess, until the ceremony was over—how, when it was over, she stepped forward before the company, with that stoicism which intensest passion can so strangely assume, and saluted the pair, "*bien et doucement*,"—how afterwards she accompanied the party back to the hostelry of Alençon, where it was to spend the day in revelry—and how, quitting it at the door of the hostelry, she returned to her lonely chamber.

To Marion that day was emphatically the day of darkness which, according to old-world superstition, everybody is compelled to undergo at least once in life. A miserable day, a terrible day, a day of impotent fury, hopeless sorrow, and withering remorse, every one of whose incidents burns its impression deep into the memory.

In her chamber, l'Estalée remained for hours—brooding over guilty woes, and writhing under the lashes of the Furies. There, in the very focus of human suffering, she sat, the realisation of the picture so powerfully painted in the *Giaour*—

> Darkness above, despair beneath,
> Around *her* flame, within *her* death.

"Two hours after midday" she bethought her of the promise of la

Barre, and hurried to the Rue Froidmantel, where she conducted herself as one possessed—wringing her hands, gesturing wildly, rending her hair and her garments, and sending forth fierce complaints which were not altogether without foundation. From the evidence it appears that Hainsellin dealt with her as such scoundrels deal with such women. He had used her money as unscrupulously as her affections. He was even indebted to her for his life. In a dangerous illness, wherein he had no one else to look to and no other shelter for his head, she had conveyed him to her lodging and nursed him herself carefully and tenderly back to health. Poor l'Estallée! wicked she was, and immoral in the extreme, but still thoroughly devoted and self-sacrificing—excellent in that which makes the most excellent quality of woman—who does not pity her?

Having subsided into something like composure, Marion was again sworn to secresy by the beldame, and the garlands were produced. "Holding them in her left hand," narrated the unfortunate, "she crossed them with her right, while she muttered over them some words too low for me to hear. Then she handed them to me with these directions—'Go to the hostelry where the marriage feast is held, and when you see the married couple join in the dance, make some excuse—such as stooping to tie your shoe, or to pick up something you have dropped—which will enable you to place the garlands in their way without exciting attention. If you so manage that they shall tread upon them, I promise you that your wish shall be accomplished.'"

Here, as Marion asserted, she was seized with a scruple. She, whose life was one round of mortal sin, actually shrank from imperilling her precious soul by following the instructions of the ogress. That the scruple was real we do not doubt; over and over again have we witnessed the like. But when Margot answered her that the garlands were, and would remain, perfectly harmless to every one but the bridegroom and the bride, her scruples evaporated, and she consented to go through with the sorcery.

Concealing the things beneath her dress, Marion hastened to the festive scene. There she found the company footing it with plebeian vigour. And there, thanks to the easy manners of the period, she found no difficulty in joining the dance—having a partner whom the greffier has not forgotten to describe with excruciating precision as one-eyed Thomas, a familiar servant of the Duke of Touraine. And here we must pause to protest against that habit peculiar to the law, which will persist in taking advantage of the trial of a thorough-paced scoundrel to consign to immortality all the more unpleasant peculiarities of respectable people.

In the course of the evening, Marion managed to deposit her garlands. Having no further business there, she went home to supper; and after supper she hastened to the tavern to report progress, and be again assured of success.

The Monday and Tuesday following "the unfortunate" spent in an excursion to Montmartre. There some gossip respecting the newly married led her to think that the spell had failed. She returned, therefore,

to Paris exceedingly downcast, to be reassured by a report—a true one, as it happened—that bride and bridegroom were ill, the latter alarmingly. This, with the addition of a conversation in which the ogress continued to laud her nostrums and to encourage the hopes of her dupe, was the end of this unparalleled confession.

Margot was confronted with Marion, whose depositions were read over to her. To everything contained therein the crone gave the most unqualified contradiction. "And saying and affirming upon her oath that the deponent had lied most maliciously and foully, *she challenged the said Marion to single combat, and threw down her gage.*"

Here it may be remarked that the peculiar form of trial, termed by battle, was then in full swing. Not quite four years before, all Paris had witnessed the celebrated duel between Carouge and Legris; and though it was usual for women who challenged, or accepted challenge, to appear in the lists by deputy, they were at full liberty, as many instances show, to refuse championship, and do battle in person.*

In this instance the duel was at once refused. Then Margot attempted to prove an *alibi* with respect to the events which told most heavily against her, but managed merely to elicit further proof thereof. This, however, was not yet considered convincing; and, to procure what was needed, it was determined to torture both the prisoners once more. They began with Marion, who adhered to her last confession. She, therefore, was soon released from the rack, which closed the proceedings for that day.

On Saturday the prisoners were re-examined. Marion confirmed her confession, and attributed her early denials to the oaths which the ogress had induced her to take, and also to the persuasions of the latter during their confinement together. She added, that her tortured and weakened limbs had given her good cause to regret her obstinacy.

Margot was now ordered to be questioned by water; and here, like her predecessor, she gave way before a single drop of the fluid could be employed. Her confession was as ample as could be desired; it was in great part a recapitulation of that of l'Estallée. What was new therein referred exclusively to matters of sorcery, and ran as follows:—When about to deliver the garland to Marion, she described herself as calling up the demon in these words: "Enemy, I conjure thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou come hither to me!" "Then," said she, "I made a third and smaller garland, which I threw on a bench behind me. Immediately afterwards, when I was about to cross the larger garland, I saw, at my elbow, an enemy of the form and fashion of the enemies who appear in the passion plays, with the exception, that this one had no horns. He asked what I wanted with him. I replied, 'I give you yonder garland on condition that you plague Hainsellin and his wife in such a way that Marion shall

* See THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for December 1870, p. 737.

have full reparation for the wrongs they have done her.' Then the enemy departed, bearing with him the little garland. I saw him fly out through a window that was open in the chamber with a noise like a whirlwind, and I was much afraid."

Being questioned still further of the invocation of fiends—a matter concerning which the judges displayed an extremely puerile curiosity—she replied by relating a circumstance which had occurred some twenty-four years before. "Being in the fields under Montmartre, with a daughter of sin like myself, we began to tell of our lovers. Then this girl, who was a Fleming, but whose name I have forgotten, taught me how to invoke the devil. And then and there did I invoke him as she instructed, crying out, 'Devil, guard and aid me and my lover (whom I named), so that he may never love any but myself!' When I had spoken, somebody, whom I could not see, replied, and in my terror I ran and hid myself in a little hut that we had constructed with turf and brambles."

Concerning the Satanic portion of the old tavern-keeper's confession, it is but right to remark that her judges had evidently made up their minds that something of the kind must have occurred, and that they were as evidently determined to tear that something from her lips, even though they should rack her asunder in the process. The victim of her own cunning and sordidness saw clearly that her fate was decided, and, to preserve her wretched limbs from unnecessary suffering, she concocted the stories whose outlines we have given.

On Sunday, Margot was re-examined alone; and on Monday, in company with Marion. She was found to adhere steadily to her confession; nor did her companion recall aught that she had said.

Finally, on Thursday, the 9th of August, the pair were brought up for judgment. The court was a full one, numbering full twenty members. They were unanimous in condemning la Barre to be exposed in the pillory, and then burnt as a witch. With respect to l'Estallée, there was a difference of opinion. Five of her judges would fain have substituted banishment for the fatal penalty; but, as three-fourths of the assembled sages voted for death, the merciful intentions of the minority were frustrated. The sentence was executed on the instant. Years had yet to elapse before the exertions of a great penitent, who in his day had been a mighty sinner, Pierre Craon, could succeed in procuring for criminals condemned to death the solace offered by religion. The two, therefore, were hurried from the judgment-hall to the pillory, and thence to the stake and their long account—

> Unhousel'd, unanointed, unanel'd:
> No reckoning made,
> With all their imperfections on their head.

As to Hainsellin Planete, who repaid the sacrifices and rid himself of the importunities of a devoted mistress by doing her to death, no further mention is made of him.

Christopher Marlowe.

As one of the great forerunners of the most glorious era in English literature, Christopher Marlowe would be deserving of recognition and consideration if from that circumstance alone. When this scholar of Cambridge University first began to sing those numbers which were afterwards to make him justly distinguished, the rich full song of old Dan Chaucer had well nigh died away, or at least was almost exclusively cherished by those whose tastes and pursuits were of a purely literary character. Shakspeare, though living, had as yet given no intimation of that majestic strength of wing which he afterwards attained. The speculation may, we believe, be accepted as indubitably correct, that the fame of the work of Marlowe had reached his ear before he attempted the writing of tragedy; but the death of the subject of this article occurred before the production of most of those dramas—certainly the ripest of them—which are now associated with the name of the sublime poet of Stratford. That the author of *Hamlet* was more than acquainted with Marlowe's name is an assured fact, not only because the ruling literary spirit of that age, Ben Jonson, had passed upon him a high encomium, but for the reason that Shakspeare himself made quotations of certain expressions in his plays. It must be admitted that of all the poets immediately introductory to the Elizabethan period, Marlowe exhibited the largest promise, and developed the highest genius. In truth, to read his works and remember at the same time that the writer had "shuffled off this mortal coil" at the age of twenty-nine, we are struck not only with the wondrous fulness of his mind, but the wealth of his intellectual and poetic gifts. To be the author, when a mere youth, of several plays which are worthy of being associated with those of the world's greatest dramatist may well entitle him to reverential regard. But, in addition to the claim he has upon us as the principal link between a bygone and a coming age, there is another light in which Marlowe may be viewed, and honour put upon his name. His "mighty line" has been referred to again and again by historians and critics since it first earned the praise of that learned brother of the dramatic craft already cited; but as a well-ascertained matter it was the only "line" of blank verse warranting the name till his immediate successors raised the art of dramatic poetry to its most exalted height. Halting and defective to the last degree as was the blank verse in vogue at the period when Marlowe first began to write, he speedily showed it to be capable of a perfection which had never yet been dreamt of. His verse is frequently noticeable for its dignity and impressiveness, and but very rarely for its

weakness and gracelessness. Occasionally, as with most writers, he leaves the impression that he has not fully grasped his subject before committing himself to its treatment, and his work loses in proportion and symmetry; but, upon the whole, his dramas are, to an exceedingly small degree only, open to the objection of crudity and meanness. He can tread the stage as a king, when the monarch's step is required.

A benignant face looks out upon us as we contemplate the countenance of this early dramatist. He seems invested with a calm which is in strange keeping with his brief and tragic career. Eyes which beam softly as those of woman shine beneath a noble expanse of brow, and the whole face is full of conscious power and repose. Yet he spent his time, as we are informed, between inditing dramas and fighting in pothouses—at least such are the two salient facts preserved for posterity in his meagre biography. But we cannot help thinking that great injustice is done to him from the fact that so few details of his life are known. While his sanguine temperament, quick passions, and probable devotion to the bottle at sundry seasons, would be sufficient to account for the miserable quarrel which led to his untimely death, there may, after all, have been a substratum of nobility of heart and life for which he has received no credit. It is impossible to believe, even without pinning our faith to a positive reading of character by physiognomical signs, which we should refuse to do, after studying the man's work, generous impulses, and eloquent features, that he could have been the mere sensualist he has been sometimes described, a being in whom the brute ever held the dominant sway. There is no evidence whatever that he was irretrievably depraved, but much indirect, yet strong, evidence to the contrary. Distinguished at a very early age for his learning, and the author of so much ripe work at a period when most men only begin to take the pen in hand, it is a matter of sheer incompatibility that he could have served at the shrine of Bacchus and that of the drama with equal fervour. A temporary aberration might now and then have seized him, which in fact is thus duly recorded, when the madness of intoxication filled the brain: a thing not very strange in a time when the veins of literary men generally were too often heated by the blood of the grape. Marlowe unquestionably has the reputation of having been both a free and evil liver; but in dealing with these accusations, and weighing them with candour, it must not be forgotten that by far the major part of them were preferred by his personal enemies. To support him in his theory as regards the peculiar manifestations of genius at the commencement of the period of the Renaissance, M. Taine has adopted the worst of the charges made against the dramatist, and in the most wholesale manner. From these charges he has ably instituted a comparison between the character of the man and his works. The comparison is very ingenious, and somewhat subtle; but inasmuch as it is not necessarily, but only problematically, true, it must stand for little more than a mere curiosity of criticism. The tendency to discover the influence of personal idiosyncracy and psychological impressions left upon the works

of English authors, is one that is very strong in M. Taine, and it is too frequently seen carried to excess. His criticism on Marlowe, summed up into one sentence—if we may exercise the hardihood of thus summarily dealing with it—is to the following effect: He was a wild, fiery spirit, utterly incapable of self government, or of being governed by anybody else; and his work reflects the bombast, the recklessness, and the violence of his own nature. To a great extent this may be true of Marlowe, but it must not be accepted as exhaustive of either side of the question. Just as there is a great deal more in his writings than M. Taine has indicated, so also there may have been a great deal more in the man than those salient characteristics which, when observed at all anywhere, are beheld in very glaring prominence. He had a tolerable endowment of noisy vice, but he may also have possessed a sufficient amount of quiet virtue. That is the point we care to contend for at the present moment; and as something more must be said touching Marlowe's character and religious views at a later stage, we shall halt as regards the matter at this juncture.

Born exactly two months before Shakspeare, Marlowe first looked out upon the world at Canterbury on February 26, 1564. In that most attractive of cathedral cities his father resided, pursuing, according to some assurances that we have, the humble trade of a shoemaker. Other authorities, however, whose evidence is more worthy to be relied upon, describe him as the clerk of St. Maries. Christopher was one of five children, the others being two sons and two daughters. It is just possible that the father's employment in connection with the church was of some assistance to him in procuring education for his children, in addition to the other advantages which residence in a cathedral city affords in this respect. Several centuries ago the latter consideration was one of much importance, as a school was a necessary adjunct to the cathedral. Marlowe, too, may also have found friends amongst the clergy of Canterbury, who divined in him more than ordinary intelligence, and who determined to assist in its cultivation accordingly. But, be that as it may, he was not one to lose the natural advantages amidst which he was placed. He had within reach all the pleasures of the country life respecting which the poets sing so freely, and at the same time there were grand architectural beauties constantly in view which could not fail to leave upon his soul impressions of awe and grandeur. There are certain points in connection with Marlowe's life at Canterbury which remain in a state of dubiousness even to this day, notwithstanding the efforts of Dyce, Cunningham, and others to elucidate them. The first-named biographer quotes an extract from the Treasurer's accounts of the King's School which proves that Marlowe was a scholar from Michaelmas, 1578, to Michaelmas, 1579. To demonstrate the difficulties of constructing history, or of tracing it, however, it is stated that the accounts themselves for the greater part of this very year named and for the preceding and subsequent years are all missing. It is somewhat cheering, nevertheless, amidst this Sahara of unascertained and unascertainable knowledge, to come upon the basis of

positive assurance that our dramatist was entered at Benet (Corpus Christi) College, Cambridge, in the year 1580; that is, when he was sixteen years of age. Because of what might be simply an imperfect entry in the College books, as Col. Cunningham points out (and it is to this compiler we are principally indebted for our biographical facts), the conclusion has been hastily arrived at that Marlowe missed gaining one of the two scholarships which attached to the school at Canterbury in which he was educated. The world cares little for such matters as this now; the fame of the scholar is decreed, and the silence of his detractors is as utter and complete as oblivion can make it. But it is interesting to note that when only just over seventeen years of age Marlowe matriculated as pensioner of his College; that two years later he proceeded B.A.; and that in 1587 he commenced M.A. Nash and Greene were the only two of his contemporaries at Cambridge who afterwards attained to literary laurels. It is suggested, and with a reasonable amount of plausibility, that Marlowe spent an interregnum of some two or three years, of which we have no account, in travelling abroad, and that possibly he joined the forces of Leicester and Sidney engaged in the wars of the Low Countries. He has numerous references in his works which might support this theory. But whether travelling, fighting, or remaining at home, he must have cultivated his affection towards literature, and have been laying in at this time those stores of information which for a brief span only he was afterwards to illuminate by the sun of his genius. Collier, indeed, asserts that both parts of *Tamburlaine the Great* had been publicly performed in London in the year 1587, which was the date at which, as we have seen, Marlowe commenced M.A. This fact alone will serve to show the amazing strength of his intellectual nature. That one who had barely attained his majority should write two such tragedies—which, with all their faults, possess an actuality of power and pathos truly surprising—seems almost incredible. The fact might well excite doubt were it not corroborated by the still more extraordinary one that in six years (or little more) from this very time, the brain was stilled for ever which had conceived *Dr. Faustus* and revelled in the Elegies of Ovid. Some idea of the pleasant amenities indulged in by literary men of the olden time may be gathered from the tirade of abuse which was indirectly heaped upon the head of Marlowe by Nash in a preface to a work by Greene, his bosom friend. The incensed and probably jealous Nash refers to "those idiot art masters who intrude themselves to our ears as the alchymists of eloquence, who (mounted on the stage of arrogance) think to outbrave better pens by the swelling bombast of braggart blank verse;" and the writer also chastises "those who commit the digestion of their choleric incumbrances to the spacious volubility of a drumming decasyllabon." From all which it will be perceived that Nash exhibits a tavern-like ability and freedom in the use of hard adjectives, but also that the invective in which they are imbedded is not really much in advance of the eloquence of the tavern as regards real powers of satire. As no work has yet been written which is abso-

lutely perfect, so there was just a little foundation afforded by the weaknesses of Marlowe's style for the onslaughts of those who, if they could never hope to rival him, had the refuge always made use of by ignoble minds—that of vituperation and vilification. There can be little question that Nash and others must have been startled by the potency of the new writer, and alarmed at the prospect that their own names must suffer a speedy eclipse in the splendour of the more powerful aspirant; and from *their* point of view it was all-important that the new comer should be pierced by their arrows in every joint of his armour which could be discovered assailable. Accordingly, it was hoped to damage Marlowe irretrievably, because his common characters were made occasionally to talk the language of the gods; his bombast afforded excellent footing as a ladder wherewith to drag him down from the height of fame to which he had already reached. He was so great, that he had been able to throw away all the traditional notions of his art and to strike out upon an original path; he had dared to be true to a new light which he felt that he possessed; and whenever a man thus resolves of course he gains as many enemies as friends—the former generally regarding him with the keener interest of the two. But genius was never yet killed by ridicule; the man sometimes may be, but his work never. The world teems with instances where what is now hailed as the great outcome of great minds was once assailed with a malignity which nothing could daunt, and a persistency which seemed to forebode destruction; but the work survives, and the assailants, where are they? The very writings of Marlowe which were so ruthlessly attacked by his contemporaries are now universally regarded with admiration as the first springings forth of that rill of dramatic literature which afterwards gathered strength and became a broad and mighty river.

Hallam has left us an opinion of *Tamburlaine the Great*, the tragedy which called forth the animadversions of Nash, which may fitly be referred to here. Considering the calm balance of mind usually preserved by that careful and discriminating writer, the praise accorded to Marlowe's early work is indeed lofty, though, as we hope presently to see, not too lofty when the merits of the tragedy are fully considered. He says: "This play has more spirit and poetry than any which, upon clear grounds, can be shown to have preceded it. We find also more action on the stage, a shorter and more dramatic dialogue, a more figurative style, with a far more varied and skilful versification. If Marlowe did not re-establish blank verse, which is difficult to prove, he gave it at least a variety of cadence and an easy adaptation of the rhythm to the sense, by which it easily became in his hands the finest instrument that the tragic poet has ever employed for his purpose, less restricted than that of the Italians, and falling occasionally almost into prose; lines of fourteen syllables being very common in all our old dramatists, but regular and harmonious at other times, as the most accurate ear could require." The *Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, which was Marlowe's

next play, avoided some of the faults observable in its predecessor, partly owing to the fact that the author himself had doubtless become conscious that his style must not be allowed to degenerate into rant, and partly because the nature of the subject itself forbade the use of so extravagant a diction. It is said—and there is no reason, judging from internal evidence, for thinking the supposition is incorrect—that a number of interpolations have been made in the text of *Faustus* for which Marlowe is not responsible, and which are in nowise germane to his genius. Of his other dramatic works more remains still to be said, as they are dealt with in their proper order; but a passing reference may be made to the effect produced upon the writers of his own day by the beautiful poem on the old but never wearisome legend of the loves of *Hero and Leander*. So popular was this composition that the Water Poet and his brother scullers upon the Thames used to sweeten their toil by singing or reciting favourite passages from it. And we have few richer treasures of its kind to linger lovingly over now.

But the thread of our biographical narrative is in danger of being interrupted. What had become of the dramatist during the construction of these plays which we have mentioned, and others which we must yet enumerate? The only facts of a definite nature in his personal history to be relied upon are, first, that he tried his fortune upon the stage, where he had no long run; and, secondly, that his reputation was of a most objectionable description: then, finally, the violent end of a violent life, of which we have spoken, must not be forgotten. Being in a tavern at Deptford, carousing with individuals of the lowest strata of society, he received an insult which his choleric temper could ill brook. In endeavouring to avenge it, by some chance his own weapon was turned against himself in the scuffle, and he received a mortal wound. Whether the facts be exactly as stated or no, he undoubtedly perished in this same brawl; but those who profess to apportion the blame and fix a stigma on Marlowe, only do so upon posthumous evidence said to have been based upon contemporary statements—which statements, nevertheless, were made, as already seen, by persons inimical to the dramatist. So much for the tragedy of Marlowe's own life. Short as it was, it seems to have been passed amidst a great deal of physical excitement, not unmingled with excess. But that the last few years of his life were a prolonged orgie, is an assertion which may be at once dismissed as base and unfounded. Periods of calm and leisure were essential to his genius; and these periods must have been obtained, since the monuments which were the result of them are still existing. The eulogy passed upon Marlowe by his illustrious contemporary dramatist was not earned without effort, we may be sure; and when it is remembered that those who traduced him hated him most of all on religious grounds, we should be doubly cautious in the reception of statements which, if believed, would make him a Faust and a Mephistopheles combined.

Perhaps the most striking quality observable in Marlowe is his breadth.

Whatever defects may be alleged against his execution, and however faulty may be his style, his conceptions are gigantic. He revels in his strength like a giant. He reminds us in his wildness and grandeur of those heights of the Brocken, where Faust is supposed to have sealed his compact with the Evil One. Tempestuous to a degree, he is, as compared with the other writers of his age, what the surging and ever restless ocean is to the still pool. Take up any of his works, and they will be found distinguished by a uniform greatness of conception. The imagination from which they proceeded is lofty, strong, and impassioned. Excrescences cannot hide his greatness; the mountain summit is not always obscured by black absorbing clouds. A free and daring spirit is stamped upon all that he has done: a spirit that knew no fear of man, and, it is to be assumed, felt little awe of God. His works are the most unrestrained exhibition of power of which we have any knowledge. Other dramatists may have exhibited the same recklessness, but then they have not possessed the same strength. As regards Shakspeare, note here one of those points in which he is the king of the poets. There was the same power as in Marlowe, but he also possessed a quietude which gives us an idea of what we should call the unexpended forces of his nature. To draw an analogy from the physical world around us, and apply it to Shakspeare, we should say he was equally at home in painting the flower as in wielding the earthquake. He was, at pleasure, self-infused with the spirit of a child, or the iron will of a Julius Cæsar. It is just this capacity of instituting a close relation between himself and any unit of humanity whatsoever, that separates him from the rest of his kind. Marlowe was great and sublime, but not from this all-enfolding point of view. His greatness was a plain and palpable one, and not a suggestive greatness. He has given us royal spirits, royally conceived; but we ask in vain for his Falstaffs, his Bardolphs, his Juliets, and his Portias. What types he has drawn are as true and accurate (not all, but most of them) as those of his great successor; and perhaps we are a little unjust in demanding from him more when we consider the brief span of his existence. It is possible that had his life been prolonged we should have received from him work worthy of being compared with much of Shakspeare's own. There was in him the outline of a transcendent genius, but the opportunity failed him of filling up its wonderful proportions.

Another distinguishing peculiarity of this dramatist is his power over the passions. *Dr. Faustus* is sufficient evidence of the gift he possessed in this respect. Mark the alternations of feeling in the mind of the leading character, and see how boldly they are drawn—whilst at the end the absorbing sentiment of the reader is one of admiration, not unmingled with sorrow, for Faustus, even in the great climax of his fate. The same power is carried into several of the scenes in *Edward the Second*—one especially being as pathetic a passage as can be discovered almost anywhere. And the passion is not the simulated passion of the writer of books, but of the reader of men. The counterfeit is not per-

ceptible here. It is genuine passion genuinely depicted. The whole vocabulary of grief seems to have been in Marlowe's possession. The hell of a miserable mind has been penetrated with deep and searching vision. Beneath the demoniacal fury which appears to utterly envelope many of his characters is to be seen a more complicated series of passions than would at first sight strike the beholder. The demon has but one element, but one feeling, but one plan of action; but the humanity which Marlowe has drawn has the real strife of elements. He shows the secret workings of good against evil, and *vice versâ*; and he has chosen for treatment men in whom the volcano of passion is for ever surging and emitting its mixed products of stones and lava. Marlowe is a superb Byron. Upon the nineteenth century poet has been superadded to the violence and the darkness of profound passion its true dignity. Marlowe is greater, more splendid in his rage and his denunciation, probably from the fact that his soul, though more unbelieving, had yet a larger sincerity than Byron's. Manfred appears a fearful individuality; but, if we come to look at him very closely, we shall find that he is a gentleman of whom we have very often heard before—the man who defies God and makes a great deal of noise about it; but who has not the true elements of a mighty personal being within himself. Very different is the Faustus of Marlowe. Many a man could become a Manfred; but Faustus is as rare a creation as Iago, while of a totally different type. So great is Marlowe's conception of this character, that he has not been able to do expressed justice to it. He has had glimpses of the veritable being himself, with all his enormous thoughts and desires, but has failed to reduce him altogether into shape. But, indistinct as he sometimes appears, the glimpses we do get of him fully attest what a magnificent being he is. And herein, we think, lies the difference between Marlowe's tragedy and Goethe's. The latter work is the history of a soul and something more. We are attracted partly by the paraphernalia of the drama, and not overwhelmed by the individual creation. In Marlowe's tragedy we see little but Faustus; but he is enough. He covers the canvas with his great and sombre presence, awful in the vastness of his wishes and the daring of his imagination. And this is but one of the characters which the dramatist has left us. Little inferior in vividness of drawing is the Jew of Malta, the predecessor of a still more notorious Jew, and therefore the more original. In all his conceptions Marlowe was never afraid of carrying the passions to their utmost height and fulness. It is the mark of the strong writer when he reaches this perfection. Irresolution and weakness have no place in characters which they mean to be the embodiments of human feeling: they know their ends and pursue them. It may be objected to Marlowe that the range of his vision is somewhat limited, looking to the number of his individual creations; but it is apparent to any one, nevertheless, that his capacity of representation of what he has set himself to depict knows little if any limitation. That he has not left a larger gallery of portraits behind him is not a reproach to his genius, but the result of the interference of the

ill-fated hand of Death; the painting of such of those as he has drawn is more distinct than Vandyke's and bolder than Rembrandt's.

Tamburlaine the Great is a drama in two parts, in which the writing is very unequal in strength. Charged occasionally with all the commanding eloquence which the dramatist well knew how to use, many of the scenes, taken in the bulk, are not worthy of his genius, but are disfigured by faults which we can only too clearly see it was but natural should lay him open to censure. The first part is introduced to the reader by a prologue in which Marlowe displays his contempt for the "jigging veins of rhyming mother wits, and such conceits as clownage keeps in pay," and he goes on to promise a very different class of entertainment from that which these same poor wits generally provided. We are inclined to be somewhat doubtful whether the promise will be redeemed when we find the King of Persia—from whom we should certainly have expected more exalted language—addressing his brother in these exceedingly commonplace terms in the very first lines of the play:—

> Brother Cosroe, I find myself aggrieved,
> Yet insufficient to express the same.

The drama soon moves on, fortunately, to more important matter and in the second scene we are presented with a very effective interview between Tamburlaine and his beautiful captive Zenocrate, the daughter of the Soldan of Egypt, in which the former unfolds his prophecies of the career which shall end by filling the earth with his dreaded name. The Persian Theridamas, who was afterwards persuaded to forsake his Sovereign through the persuasivenes of Tamburlaine, well describes the terror of the world in these lines,—

> Tamburlaine! A Scythian shepherd so embellish'd
> With nature's pride and richest furniture!
> His looks do menace Heaven, and dare the gods;
> His fiery eyes are fixed upon the earth,
> As if he now devised some stratagem,
> Or meant to pierce Avernus' darksome vaults,
> To pull the triple-headed dog from hell.

Equally successful in love and war, the daring adventurer and warrior pursues his destiny. Resolution to obtain possession with him means instant fruition; and his hot and boundless ambition, which nothing mortal could satisfy, is graphically traced by the plastic pen of the narrator. The aspiring shepherd holds that a god is not half so glorious as a king; and in words which have been altered by Milton only to the extent of taking the nether regions instead of paradise for his fine declaration—Tamburlaine proceeds to say,—

> I think the pleasure they enjoy in heaven
> Cannot compare with kingly joys in earth.

It is more than probable that these, and the immediately succeeding lines in the drama, rang in the later bard's ears when he wrote that it was

> Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

The insatiable lust of power, and its gradual absorption of the entire being, were never better depicted than in Marlowe's delineation of Tamburlaine. He is in every sense a great warrior, whose conceptions of campaigns and conquests are equalled by his prodigious executive ability. He declares that he has no room to entertain the thought of defeat; if he is moved to obtain the Persian crown, he attains his object with ease. What is in the grasp of man to accomplish shall be achieved by him, for he is penetrated with the sense of his superiority over mankind, and of his equality with the gods. His ideas, plans, and swift and whirlwind-like movements, and indomitable courage fully attest that he is no mere boaster, but one who will ride the age as its master and its monarch. The play is admirable for the manner in which this apotheosis is worked out, and Tamburlaine lifted out of the vulgar category of ordinary humanity. His secret passions are dissected with that psychological insight for which the dramatist is remarkable, and the mind, as well as the deeds, of the great scourge of Asia is laid bare to our gaze. With all its inflation and bombast, the play is very forcible, and in certain parts very beautiful. This passage, put into the mouth of the warrior himself, is large in thought, daring, and instinct with rugged and striking oratory:—

Now clear the triple region of the air,
And let the majesty of Heaven behold
Their scourge and terror tread on emperors.
Smile, stars, that reigned at my nativity,
And dim the brightness of your neighbour lamps!
Disdain to borrow light of Cynthia!
For I, the chiefest lamp of all the earth,
First rising in the East with mild aspect,
But fixed now in the meridian line,
Will send up fire to your turning spheres,
And cause the sun to borrow light of you.
My sword struck fire from his coat of steel,
Even in Bithynia, when I took this Turk;
As when a fiery exhalation,
Wrapt in the bowels of a freezing cloud,
Fighting for passage, makes the welkin crack,
And casts a flash of lightning to the earth:
But ere I march to wealthy Persia,
Or leave Damascus and the Egyptian fields,
As was the fame of Clymene's brain-sick son,
That almost bent the axle-tree of heaven,
So shall our swords, our lances, and our shot
Fill all the air with fiery meteors:
Then when the sky shall wax as red as blood,
It shall be said I made it red myself,
To make me think of nought but blood and war.

This is befitting declamation, loud and trumpet-tongued, to assign to the man who, on another occasion, uttered the following vigorous description of himself—

The god of war resigns his room to me,
Meaning to make me general of the world;

Jove, viewing me in arms, looks pale and wan,
Fearing my power should pull him from his throne.

The character foreshadowed in these lines is well sustained; the gigantic figure is never dwarfed, nor do his enormous passions ever exhibit the least inclination to satiety. He feasts his eyes upon the woes of Bajazet, who is borne about with him in a cage, and who has the double misfortune of seeing his conqueror march forth to victory after victory, kings falling before him as the tall blades of corn before the hurricane. The woes of the Emperor of the Turks and his faithful empress are related with much pathos, and their self-destruction completed in a scene of strong and natural emotion. At the opening of the second portion of the drama we find Tamburlaine in the zenith of his power and fame. The ever-victorous sovereign has discomfited the great Christian host under Sigismund, and there is nothing more left for him to do, except to enjoy the fruits of his victories. Yet, in the very next scene to that in which his greatest triumph is celebrated, we behold Tamburlaine miserable and dejected. Disease has seized upon the form of Zenocrate, his illustrious consort, and he who had boasted of his invincible might is powerless to arrest its progress. Graphically is the lesson indicated of the rapid succession of joy and despair for all humanity. The conqueror is at last conquered. The captor of one hundred kings watches the gradual advance of an insidious disease in helplessness and anguish. He sees that form, which, had it lived before the siege of Troy, "Helen had not been named in Homer's Iliades," wither and expire, and from that moment his sun of prosperity begins to set. He can, however, wreak his revenge for the loss of Zenocrate in one method, eminently suggestive of his imperious and cruel spirit, and he accordingly consumes with fire the city in which she died. The play moves on with real dramatic interest and energy. The enraged monarch teaches his sons the art of war, in which he would see them become like masters with himself, and because one of them, Calyphas by name, does not take kindly to the occupation of blood, the furious father stabs him to the heart. He makes his son's death the occasion for an outburst of wrath, in which he threatens unheard of horrors for the world. Being remonstrated with by the kings of Jerusalem, Syria, and Trebizond for his cruelty, Tamburlaine replies in the following strain, which is one of the most powerful pieces of rhetoric to be found in our author:—

Villains! these terrors and these tyrannies
I execute, enjoined me from above,
To scourge the pride of such as heaven abhors;
Nor am I made arch-monarch of the world,
Crowned and invested by the hand of Jove
For deeds of bounty and nobility:
But since I exercise a greater name,
The scourge of God and terror of the world,
I must apply myself to fit those terms,
In war, in blood, in death, in cruelty,

And plague such peasants as resist in me
The power of heaven's eternal majesty.
* * * * *
I will with engines never exercised,
Conquer, sack, and utterly consume
Your cities and your golden palaces,
And, with the flames that beat against the clouds,
Incense the heavens, and make the stars to melt,
As if they were the tears of Mahomet,
For hot consumption of his country's pride;
And, till by vision, or by speech I hear
Immortal Jove say, "Cease, my Tamburlaine,"
I will persist a terror to the world,
Making the meteors (that, like armed men
Are seen to march upon the towers of heaven),
Run tilting round about the firmament,
And break their burning lances in the air
For honour of my wondrous victories.

The fact that these speeches of Tamburlaine's are disfigured occasionally by outrageous exaggerations and ranting eccentricities does not by any means destroy their effect, whilst they enjoy that great distinction of being the first really serious attempt to revolutionise contemporary blank verse.

Confessedly, however, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* must be regarded, in accordance with the general verdict, as the *chef-d'œuvre* of Marlowe. It has a strength and directness of purpose most distinctly traced in every scene, whilst the individuality of the leading character (a quality to which we have previously made some reference) is most striking and complete. It is a drama in which the most intense interest is evoked and sustained. The conception is so vivid, that the whole thing gives us the impression that it might have been written at one sitting. We know, of course, that this is impossible, but the illusion is only a so much stronger tribute to the powers of the writer. Faustus, whose personality has already come before us, may not appear altogether a desirable character, in the matter of detailed drawing and elaboration, but we should search well nigh in vain to discover a worthy rival to him in the gigantic force of his ruling ideas, and for the admirable manner in which his unappeasable craving for enjoyment has been delineated. In truth, he is almost appalling from his defiance of all the canons of humanity, and for those flights of an uncontrolled and unbridled imagination in which he indulges. Hazlitt well says of him, translating into excellent language what will be the thought of all readers of the tragedy—"Faustus, in his impatience to fulfil at once and for a moment, for a few short years, all the desires and conceptions of his soul, is willing to give in exchange his soul and body to the great enemy of mankind. Whatever he fancies becomes by this means present to his sense; whatever he commands is done. He calls back time past, and anticipates the future; the visions of antiquity pass before him. Babylon in all its glory, Paris, and Œnone; all the projects of philosophers, or creations of the poet, pay tribute at his feet; all the delights of fortune,

of ambition, of pleasure, and of learning, are centred in his person; and from a short-lived dream of supreme felicity and drunken power, he sinks into an abyss of darkness and perdition. This is the alternative to which he submits; the bond which he signs with his blood! As the outline of the character is grand and daring, the execution is abrupt and fearful. The thoughts are vast and irregular, and the style halts and staggers under them. 'With uneasy steps, such footing found the sole of unblest feet.' There is a little fustian and incongruity of metaphor now and then, which is not very injurious to the subject." It is a curious fact with regard to this drama, that though written several years before his death, no edition of it was published during the lifetime of its author, while many of the editions now current present Marlowe's text very much mutilated. It may have been the fancied improvements of other hands which resulted in the introduction of those passages that are open to the charge of buffoonery. It is pointed out that there are three editions of the tragedy which were not known to Dyce, and Hazlitt deemed it highly probable that there might have been an earlier impression than any yet discovered. Under these circumstances it would not be safe to assume that the drama as we have received it stands as Marlowe left it; possessing as we do some knowledge of the quality of his powers, we ought not to bind ourselves to more than admiring as his work the grand and majestic conception in its bold and simple outline, and those passages of the play which bear upon them the impress of his perfervid and tremendous genius. The hammer of Vulcan has certainly been employed to weld the joints of the armour in which Faustus is encased. The drama is no child's play, but one of terrible and engrossing import to all men. The lesson of the whole is current in lurid flames upon the surface as we proceed. The dramatist has drunk deep of ecstacies and visions, and made his work living with emotion. He rises to the character of Faustus more perfectly than does the modern artist. His passions and desires are more dramatically if not more poetically treated. The introduction of the Margaret of the later work into the earlier drama would have completely spoilt it. Given the Faust of Goethe, and Margaret does not seem inadequate as the height of earthly bliss for him, but Marlowe's Faustus is made of sterner stuff. He is cast in a larger mould, and when he demands beauty he must have presented to him Helen of Troy. Charles Lamb even, that gentle being, felt that there would have been an incompatibility between the real Faust and Margaret. Marlowe's hero experienced not the depth of the intellectual difficulties which beset Hamlet, or Goethe's Faust, but he had a more insatiable thirst of heart. Let us look a little at this oldest dramatic form in which the well-known story of Faust and his compact is presented. Marlowe, in the first act, depicts the learned Dr. Faustus in his study, and after much cogitation we find him delivering the sum of his thoughts in the opinion that "a sound magician is a demi-god," with a greater sovereignty than that of emperors and kings. But how to get this deity embodied in his own person? The daring idea is pursued with the aid of evil spirits who

arrive opportunely upon the scene. Intoxicated with his conceptions he heeds not the warnings of the scholars who remonstrate with him; but in the third scene, by the charm of a Latin invocation, calls up Mephistophilis. An argument takes place between the two, in which the magnate of hell declares that the conjuring of Faust was only the accidental cause of his appearance—

> For when we hear one rack the name of God,
> Abjure the Scriptures and his Saviour Christ,
> We fly in hope to get his glorious soul:
> Nor will we come unless he use such means
> Whereby he is in danger to be damned.
> Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
> Is stoutly to abjure all godliness,
> And pray devoutly to the Prince of Hell.

Another idea, however, is prevalent at the present day as to the raising of spirits, though whether it is yet sufficiently successful to have caused Mephistophilis to revise his opinions we are unable to say. Returning to Marlowe, in this third scene occurs a passage which the commentators have pointed out as having suggested a striking figure to Milton, though the discovery is one which would be made by any reader of the two poets. After Mephistophilis has informed Faustus that he is for ever damned in hell with Lucifer, the following dialogue occurs:—

> *Faust.* How comes it, then, that thou art out of Hell?
> *Meph.* Why, this is Hell; nor am I out of it.
> Think'st thou that I that saw the face of God,
> And tasted the eternal joys of Heaven,
> Am not tormented with ten thousand Hells
> In being deprived of everlasting bliss?

This passage immediately brings to mind familiar lines in *Paradise Lost*, but especially the one—

> Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell.

The idea is thus incontrovertibly supported that Milton, as we have already surmised, was thoroughly versed in Marlowe's works; but, if necessary, other extracts could be given which would make the tale of proof irrefragable. There is one scene in the second act of the drama of *Faustus*—that in which is beheld a procession before the Doctor of the Seven Deadly Sins—which must have been one of the interpolations in the text complained of, and not Marlowe's work. The humour is somewhat common and coarse, and various lines, as is the case with other passages which could be cited, are weak and halting. In the third act, we return again to the real author, where Faustus and his infernal tutor play their mad pranks upon the Pope, to the scandal of the cardinals, friars, and bishops. The drama proceeds, very unevenly in merit, it must be confessed, till in the fifth scene Helen of Troy is introduced to Faustus, who thus addresses her—

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul ! See where it flies ;
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy shall Wittenburg be sacked ;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest :
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
Oh ! thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars ;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appeared to hapless Semele.

But the season of voluptuous delights is now fast waning. The hour draws nigh when the final condition of the contract sealed with his blood must be completed, and as it approaches the dramatist makes Faustus already suffer the mental tortures of the lost. A vision of the terrible nature of his fate passes before him, and he comprehends something of its horrors. Nor is this all ; the being to whom he gave the indelible writing laughs at his tears and bids him despair, for such is his fate, since "fools that will laugh on earth must weep in hell." And then comes the rejoicing (which is always depicted as keener than paradisal bliss), that one irremediably doomed and godless soul feels over another whom it has dragged into the same dark and everlasting abyss. All this we behold faithfully and powerfully drawn in the concluding pages of this enthralling drama. Then arrives the final anguish of Faustus before his destruction, when he emits the agonising cry as he nears that awful midnight—

Oh, I'll leap up to heaven ! Who pulls me down ?
See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament :
One drop of blood will save me. Oh, my Christ
Rend not my heart for naming of my Christ ;
Yet will I call on him. Oh, spare me, Lucifer !—
Where is it now ?—'tis gone !
And see, a threatening arm, an angry brow !
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of heaven.
No !
Then will I headlong run into the earth ;
Gape earth ! O no, it will not harbour me.
You stars that reigned at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
Into the entrails of yon labouring cloud ;
That, when ye vomit forth into the air
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths ;
But let my soul mount and ascend to heaven.

[*The clock strikes the half-hour.*

Oh, half the hour is past ; 'twill all be past anon.
Oh, if my soul must suffer for my sin,
Impose some end to my incessant pain.
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years—
A hundred thousand—and at last be saved ;
No end is limited to damnèd souls.
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul ?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast ?

* * * * * *

[*The clock strikes twelve.*

It strikes ! it strikes ! Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell.

[*Thunder and rain.*

O soul ! be changed into small water-drops,
And fall into the ocean : ne'er be found.

[*Enter the devils.*

Oh ! mercy, heaven, look not so fierce on me !
Adders and serpents, let me breathe awhile.
Ugly hell, gape not !—Come not, Lucifer !
I'll burn my books —Oh, Mephistophilis !

The crushing eloquence of this stupendous burst of feeling falters a little in the last four lines, but taken altogether it is a prodigious effort. One is rather curious in speculating upon what Shakspeare would have made of this catastrophe, which is, perhaps, the finest single incident in the world for the writer of tragedy; but it is questionable whether even he could have accomplished a more impassioned strain, or one so suitable to the dread conception.

The Jew of Malta inevitably challenges comparison with *The Merchant of Venice* as regards its leading character. Marlowe's play is worth little except for the strong individuality with which his Jew is put upon the canvas. The avarice of the race to which Barabas belongs is forcibly exemplified, but the exaggerations of the populace respecting the excesses of the Jews which were prevalent in his day have been adopted by the dramatist in order to heighten the effect of his work. The passions of the Jew are greatly distorted, and before Marlowe has arrived at the end of his drama he has lost control over its leading character. From a startling realism with which he is conceived and elaborated in the earlier acts we pass on to a grotesque exhibition of fiendish traits without truthfulness to nature, till we arrive at a conclusion which, instead of evoking the sense of the sublime, rather excites the sense of the ludicrous. Very different is Shakspeare's method with Shylock, a character whose unity is preserved from his first appearance in the play till the very last. There is some degree of interest created in the daughter of Barabas, but she is too slightly sketched, a fault observable in many of the characters. Occasionally, however, we meet with isolated passages in the play which have a strong touch of the writer's best quality in them. This, for instance, is a striking simile, and one such as the author's genius is very felicitous in producing: it occurs in a soliloquy by the Jew—

Thus, like the sad presaging raven, that tolls
The sick man's passport in her hollow beak,
And in the shadow of the silent night
Doth shake contagion from her sable wings;
Vexed and tormented runs poor Barabas
With fatal curses towards these Christians.

The miser is most thoroughly devoted to his consuming passion, so much so that he affects the daring of appealing to the God of Abraham, "who with the fiery pillar led the sons of Israel through the dismal shades," to lead him safely in the quest of wealth. It is difficult to say, nevertheless, whether this passion, or the hatred of the Christians is stronger in his breast. His denunciations of the latter are most fierce and acrid, and an idea of their bitterness may be gained from the following lines in which he vents his feelings towards this "heretical" division of humanity:—

We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please,
And when we grin we bite, yet are our looks
As innocent and harmless as a lamb's.
I learned in Florence how to kiss my hand,
Heave up my shoulders when they called me dog,
And duck as low as any barefoot friar,
Hoping to see them starve upon a stall,
Or else be gathered for in our Synagogue;
That, when the offering basin comes to me,
Even for charity I may spit into it.

This exceedingly pleasant individual is made to over-reach himself at the end of the drama in an absurd manner, and such as we should not have predicted upon our first introduction to him. In the fury begotten of his losses he almost loses his reason, and certainly all that cunning and that coolness which are supposed to distinguish his tribe in moments of supremest danger. It is here we think that the dramatist has failed. Barabas holds that "it's no sin to deceive a Christian," a doctrine which enables him to become a robber upon principle; but having been deceived in turn he is so beside himself with rage that he is incapable of doing justice to his own principle and of reducing it to practice. So, after a good deal of plotting and counterplotting—in which it must be admitted the Jew very neatly arranges that two of his enemies should kill each other—we arrive at the final stage of the play. Barabas who had prepared a very clumsy trap for certain of his enemies, falls into a much simpler one himself, and his last words to his fellow mortals are oaths and execrations. Amidst these he expires, and the Christians feel that they are relieved of a bugbear. The second part of the drama does not display the careful workmanship to be found in the preceding acts; it is as if the artificer had become tired of his work, and having conceived his character lacked the patience to follow out its proportions.

In every respect a contrast to this tragedy, the drama of *Edward the Second* is worthy of high commendation, though we scarcely think it

warrants the lavish praise bestowed upon it by some critics. The author is again witnessed in his real strength, master of his theme, and his verse marches with all the stateliness that should attach to the subject. As an historical play it may be at once conceded that it has had few equals, while it was the first of such plays of any moment ever produced. The weakness of Edward's character is preserved, and he is not unduly allowed to excite our pity, misfortunes rapidly accumulating upon his head through his mad partiality for the favourite Gaveston. The speeches scattered through the drama attain to a noble expression; witness that of the King to his friend Leicester after he has been placed in captivity, which is full of exalted thoughts and imagery. In his lament Edward says very finely—

> The griefs of private men are soon allayed,
> But not of kings. The forest deer, being struck,
> Runs to an herb that closeth up the wounds;
> But, when the imperial lion's flesh is gored,
> He rends and tears it with his wrathful paw,
> And highly scorning that the lowly earth
> Should drink his blood, mounts upward to the air.
> And so it fares with me, whose dauntless mind
> Th' ambitious Mortimer would seek to curb.

The pathos of the concluding portions of this play has been rarely surpassed for its unstrained force and depth, and the drama, taken as a whole, shows what a field might have been open to Marlowe's successful cultivation, had but the Fates been propitious. He assuredly demonstrates the capacity for imagining the splendours of courts and the regal bearing of kings.

Although the next dramatic effort in order of consideration—*The Massacre of Paris*—is but a fragment, incomplete, disjointed, and unsatisfactory, it contains one of the most spirited speeches to be found within the range of the author's works; viz., that of the plotting Duc de Guise, the principal instigator of the infamous Bartholomew slaughter. The lines breathe of the cruel and ambitious spirit of this man, who was resolved to rise, although his downfall should possibly be the deepest hell, and who burned to become the great centre of interest with his countrymen, a mark which should be so conspicuous as to cause the world to wonder "as men that stand and gaze against the sun." In every other respect except that of the remarkable individuality of several of the characters, and two or three outbursts of passion, the fragment is almost worthless. *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, presents a chequered appearance in the workmanship, as though it had been collaborated by a master mind and a poetic buffoon. Much of it is unquestionably Marlowe's, but other passages, which savour of doggrel extraordinary, are as unquestionably not. It is affirmed that the dramatist's old assailant, Nash, had a finger in the completion of this drama, and if so, it is by no means the worst kind of revenge he could have taken upon the great writer, while pretending to make it a compliment. The student, however, will very easily dissect the chaff from the wheat, for Marlowe attains to a high excellence here, which only

serves to place his assistant's work in a more contemptible light. The illustrious Æneas loses much of the dignity generally associated with his character when we find him addressing Ascanius in these absurdly colloquial terms, which could not fail to arrest the attention of even the most casual reader:—

> Alas! sweet boy, thou must be still awhile,
> Till we have fire to dress the meat we killed;
> Gentle Achates, reach the tinder-box,
> That we may make a fire to warm us with,
> And roast our new-found victuals on this shore.

This is not the "mighty line" along which the English drama advanced to perfection. But there are other passages, notably in Act II., where Æneas relates his heroic story to Dido, which could only have proceeded from Marlowe himself: they are full of strengh and nervous energy. The passion of Dido, with its tragical ending, is traced with gathering feeling; and the Queen of Carthage is presented to us in a noble guise—a setting worthy of that renowned personage. The poem frequently rises into strains of great beauty, and anon swells with bold language, a suitable complement to the importance and greatness of the subject. Of *Hero and Leander*, and the remaining minor productions and translations of the dramatist, but little room is left to speak. The two first books, or Sestiads, of *Hero and Leander*, were all which Marlowe completed in their entirety; Chapman added the rest, working into his contribution some two hundred lines of another Sestiad which the conceiver of the task left behind him. The beauty and the swing of this poem have been fully and widely acknowledged; it is at times gorgeous in its imagery, and it is everywhere pervaded by a true poetic feeling. It has the merit of being as much an original work as a translation, for Marlowe did not suffer himself to be bound to the form from which he extracted the idea. We obtain a better apprehension of the width of the poet's imagination from this work than perhaps from any other which he has written. The principle upon which he translated these Sestiads he did not always carry into his translations, the reproduction of Ovid's *Elegies*, for example, being a line-for-line translation. His rendering of the *Elegies* was, after his death, fixed upon by the enraged bishops for the indignity of burning by the common hangman; but we know that the publication of the translation was not of the dramatist's own doing. Were it not for the fear of doing injustice to the reader in supposing that he was not familiar with one of the most charming pastoral poems in the English language, we should quote the lines entitled *The Passionate Shepherd to his Love*, in which Marlowe has reached the perfection of sweetness and grace. It will be remembered that it was to these lines Sir Walter Raleigh indited a reply, which, though it exhibits much beauty of expression, is by no means equal to the poem that called it forth. One extraordinary translation of Marlowe's should be mentioned before closing this brief review—that, namely, of the First Book of Lucan, the latter part of which may be

described as a rushing torrent of eloquence. No halting weakness is discoverable; the second workman has entirely possessed himself of the spirit of the first, and revels in his strength of vision. The whole thing is a dazzling coruscation of metaphor, description, and illustration.

Marlowe, indubitably, was a magnificent genius. His grand imagination impressed itself even upon his own age; and those who unfeignedly disliked the man were compelled to admit his power. The charges brought against him on the ground of the negative character of his religious views received strength and importance, doubtless, from the feeling that such an individual must have immense influence over others. A connection has been established between his scepticism and those dramas in which with keen delight he dwells upon topics which were in his day supposed to be placed far above speculation and inquiry. His death was regarded as a judgment upon his wicked life, and as a reward for his blasphemy and infidelity. The terrible nature of his religious delinquencies is fully set forth in Beard's *Theatre of God's Judgments*, published in 1597. We there read that Marlowe, who is designated as "a playmaker and a poet of scurrilitie," by "giving too large a swing to his owne wit, and suffering his lust to have the full reines, fell (not without just desert) to that outrage and extremitie, that hee denied God and his sonne Christ, and not onely in word blasphemed the Trinitie, but also (as is credibly reported) wrote bookes against it, affirming our Saviour to be but a deceiver, and Moses to be but a conjurer and seducer of the people, and the Holy Bible to bee but vaine and idle stories, and all religion but a device of policie. But see what a hooke the Lord put into the nostrils of this barking dogge! So it fell out, that, as he purposed to stab one whom he owed a grudge unto, with his dagger, the other party perceiving so avoyded the stroke, that, withal catching hold of his wrist, hee stabbed his owne dagger into his owne head in such sorte that, notwithstanding all the meanes of surgerie that could be wrought, hee shortly after died thereof: the manner of his death being so terrible (for hee even cursed and blasphemed to his last gaspe, and together with his breath an oath flew out of his mouth) that it was not only a manifest signe of God's judgement, but also an horrible and fearfulle terror to all that beheld him." And then the record adds, with the glee which could only fill the heart of a religious enthusiast and not of an ordinary historian, "Herein did the justice of God most notably appeare, in that hee compelled his owne hand which had written those blasphemies to bee the instrument to punish him, and that in his brain which had devised the same." A ballad, entitled *The Atheist's Tragedie*, was also published, setting forth the heinousness of Marlowe's guilt in a religious point of view; and a prose document is in existence which goes more fully than the ballad into the various points of his heterodoxy. The dramatist is charged with affirming that he could concoct a better religion than the one then in vogue; that the Apostles were base fellows, and, with the exception of Paul, were men of no wit or worth; that all Protestants were hypocritical asses; and, further (and this seems to have

been considered the acme of disgrace and villainy, for the charge is printed in italics), that he, Marlowe, had as good a right to coin as the Queen of England. There appears to have been little or no foundation for most of these charges; all is haze and perplexity in regard to them; and what positive evidence there is frequently tends to damage the character of Marlowe's assailants rather than his own. Yet as regards his theological views, the probability is that they were not more greatly unorthodox than those of many intellectual men and advanced thinkers of the present day. But the godsend of a colonial Bishop never came to the dramatist, and the full weight of religious bigotry and intolerance was thus expended upon his name and fame alone. There were none to keep him in countenance, whilst hands were lifted up in dismay and deprecation against him. We can now regard him more composedly, and in the light of his work rather than as the individual man. As an oak springing forth in an unlikely place, amongst plants and trees of puny growth, we behold this poet rising above his fellows, and stretching forth his giant arms in the early morn of dramatic literature. Appearing in an age marked by violence and excess, and devoted principally to the gratification of the fleshly lusts, the wonder is, not that he failed to disentangle himself altogether from what was impure and unworthy, but that he shook himself free so largely from the influences which had hitherto choked genius in its inception. To the prodigious strength of his own will and intellect was this result due; and though his habits may have been dissolute, and his ideas steeped in Paganism, the spirit of a sublime independence animated his soul. Beneath the full scope and license given to the passions in his works, there struggles the thought which is hereafter to make men great. His face is in shadow; it is one upon which the sun never fully shone; but even through the sombre veil which envelops it we see that the features are notable and majestic. He emerges from the darkness of one age, but does not behold the full effulgence of its successor. His perpetual tribute is that of the illustrious pioneer. He divides the honours and the crown of Columbus; for, like him, he discovered a new world.

G. B. S.

On Unaccomplished Purposes.

I READ not long ago, in the pages of this Magazine, the words—they were a quotation from the prose writings of Shelley—"A monument of an unaccomplished purpose." And they set me thinking about unaccomplished purposes generally, with or without their "monuments," the latter being immeasurably the more numerous. There are such monuments to be seen, and very sad they are to contemplate—unfinished buildings, unfinished poems, unfinished histories, unfinished romances. I never think of the words, which have been long familiar to me, without recalling my application of them, years ago, to a picturesquely-seated mansion, just twenty miles from the capital, where the noble owner and his wife dispensed their modest genial hospitality occasionally to a friend or two. There was a magnificent hall, in the Italian style, with pillars and floors in which all the marbles of Italy vied with each other for admiration, and frescoes by Keats's friend, Severn, and the commencemencement of a grand staircase leading heavenward; but you entered the house with this glorious *atrium* by a door of which the proprietor of a villa at Norwood or Hampstead would have been ashamed; and if not forewarned you have been startled by coming suddenly on this scrap of a palace. Of course there was a story about it. It had been designed by a previous owner of the place—a departed member of the family—whose intention it had been to erect by degrees a palatial residence, on the Surrey Hills. The site, indeed, was worthy of anything that marble and stone and the art of man could create. But death had stepped in, and the ambition of one could not be realised by the poverty of another; and so there is nothing but "a monument of an unaccomplished purpose."

I confess that I never felt any sadness in contemplating this. If the original design had been carried out, my host and hostess could not have been happier than they were. It was merely a chapter in the great history of the "vanity of human wishes" for which they were not responsible. But I have seen lesser architectural failures which have given me many pangs. It is a sad thing to see an unfinished house—and worse, an unfinished row of houses. You see many such in the suburbs of London. They suggest thoughts of broken fortunes, insolvencies, bankruptcies, perhaps workhouses in the end. Yet for more than eighteen centuries we have been declaiming against this folly. Did not our great Redeemer say: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he had laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that

behold him begin to mock him. Saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish." Yet men begin to build and are not able to finish, even by hundreds, in this nineteenth century.

I have all my life long had a morbid sensitiveness with respect to the failures of other people, though I have had failures of my own which have not much distressed me. I enter keenly into the disappointments of my neighbours. If I go to a theatre and see a "beggarly account of empty boxes," I have no pleasure in the night's performances, however good they may be. If I go to church, in town or country, and see empty pews, it saddens me to think of the unappreciated labour of the good man who has prepared a discourse for his congregation, and yet finds no congregation to listen to it—as may often, indeed, be found in the Established churches of Wales and Ireland and the temples of the City of London. The ministers are, probably, used and are reconciled to it, knowing all circumstances and conditions, but it has a depressing effect upon me. I cannot bear to hear that a friend's book has met with scant recognition from the public. I am saddened by the sight of the unsold pictures in the Exhibition-rooms at the end of the season. And so it is with respect to these unfinished houses. They may have been "run up by speculative builders," but somebody must have suffered by all this waste of brick and mortar. There they stand—"monuments of an unaccomplished purpose."

The unfinished works of builders of another kind—the monuments of which they could never write "Exegi"—the grand fragments of poetry, history, and romance, which lie before us, are still more touching, for death has closed the account. What noble purposes are here unaccomplished! Think of the unfinished poems of Shelley and Keats—of what they might have done, had they not been cut off in the flower of their youth! Think of that great history which Macaulay was to have brought down to a period "within the memory of living men"—how the greatest of the land sorrowed with a not unselfish sorrow, when they saw all that was mortal of that brilliant historian lowered into the vaults of the old Abbey, the great desire of his life unfulfilled! Think of the sudden close, in the midst of their work, of the careers of those two great novelists who were delighting us, from month to month, with their humour and their pathos! Tidings of the death of Thackeray came to me through a newspaper-placard on entering a market-town in Somersetshire; and the death of Charles Dickens startled me in the same way, as I was being driven through a townlet in Wales. I was taking a brief holiday on each occasion, and truly it may be said that I went on my way "a sadder and a wiser man." Each has left behind him a monument of an unaccomplished purpose—the one in *Dennis Donne*, the other in *Edwin Drood*. Was it for evil or for good? Was it better or worse for their memories that they died thus suddenly, in the fulness of their fame?—I mean, for their reputation's sake? I do not think that anyone had cause to write with respect to them those dreadful words, "falling off." Yet, it must come to all of us, some day, if we outlive the maturity of our powers. I have

fifty volumes of Walter Scott's novels on my book-shelves—I could not put my finger on the volume whence the decline of power is to be counted. I think it would be rather early in the series, though there is nothing finer than the *Talisman*, which now, in an operatic form, is the delight of the musical world. Still, it is sad to think of his last days—of so eminently healthy an intellect in its youth and its maturity coming to what it did at the last—those sad, servile attempts not wholly to forsake the old craft—not to confess the victory of age. I remember, many years ago, in the City of London, often to have seen a venerable-looking, grey-bearded old man, apparently almost blind, turning about in a vacant sort of way the handle of an empty barrel-organ, which produced never a sound. Men's hearts soon get hardened in large towns by repeated impositions, and it is difficult to discern rightly between the reality and the sham. But, looking at it in its worst aspects, it was to me an exceedingly touching piece of acting. It brought many pennies and "fourpenny-bits" into the old man's palm. He was clinging to the old craft; he thought he was producing harmonious sounds out of that empty box. He seemed to be quite crazed. What his history was I never learnt. But I thought of the many sad spectacles that I had seen in the course of my life, of which this soundless organ reminded me—of the broken-down actors, singers, authors—of the old beaux living upon by-gone fascinations, the old diners-out on their old jests, and still thinking themselves irresistible. I was present at the last appearance of Edmund Kean on the stage—and a very painful thing it was. It is better, therefore, I think, that, at least as far as his own reputation is concerned, a great genius should be stricken down in the fulness of his work, with many unaccomplished purposes to his account. In all our English poetry there are no sadder lines than these—

> From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
> And Swift expires a driveller and a show.

But, apart from these great historical monuments of unaccomplished purposes, think, too, of the number of smaller unaccomplished literary purposes discharged into the great "limbo of vanities." For any man of active imagination to write all the books that he has purposed to write he must live twice over the longest life of the Antediluvian period. Histories—Philosophies—Dramas—Poems—Romances—Essays—whole libraries of a most comprehensive character—conceived, sketched out—written, indeed, "all but the chapters," and in no few instances many of the chapters actually written. Who, after a long literary life, exploring the contents of old drawers, boxes, baskets, portfolios, &c., does not come across unfinished manuscripts—"essay, poem, or romance"—put aside under stress of more important business and forgotten, or never returned to for lack of time? All these are so many unaccomplished purposes on a smaller scale, not to be named with those tragic exemplars cited above, but still not uninstructive. I do not speak of the dreamers,

idlers, of the world, who think that genius can carry everything before it, and who wait for "an impulse"—I speak of the genuine, honest workmen, who believe in work. But many an honest workman is not a systematic workman. There is a certain desultoriness about even the most industrious and conscientious toilers of the pen. They are somewhat prone to begin, and not to finish. When a new idea seizes them, or, what is of more importance, a new order comes, they break off from the business in hand. Perhaps they attempt too much at the same time. This may be the result of a foolish ambition, which "o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side." I knew a man who was really a hard-worker, and who had a certain versatility about him, which caused him to conceive the idea of publishing at the same time a volume of history, a collection of essays, and a novel, and to produce on the stage an Elizabethan drama in blank verse. The result of this preposterous impulse of vanity was what might be expected.

> The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to scourge us.

The history, having been interrupted by these lesser exploits in the realms of fiction, was not brought to a conclusion within the expected time. The ambitious author having moved his residence (and "two removes are as bad as a fire"), the novel, unfinished, and the drama, completed, were lost: the former, after a year or two, turned up from the recesses of an unopened box; the latter is supposed to be passing out in driblets from some butterman's shop. The essays, having already appeared in a magazine, were in type, and of course safe. And this was the issue of my friend's absurd project—this was *his* unaccomplished purpose. It served him right. His vanity, some will say, was rightly punished. I think that perhaps he was saved from a greater punishment by the mishaps which I have recorded. He had a very good reputation in a particular path of literature; but his drama, if accepted, would probably have been damned, and his novel cut to pieces by the reviewers. He had the good sense to admit all this, and I believe that he has never murmured over his "unaccomplished purpose."

But all people are not house-builders, structurally or intellectually; and unfinished houses or unfinished works are but an insignificant portion, numerically speaking, of our "unaccomplished purposes." Of course, it would not become me, in a secular essay of this kind, to write of the subject in its graver aspects—to illustrate that which Johnson so powerfully described in the well-known epigram, "Hell is paved with good intentions." How gallantly we put out to sea, sails full and streamers flowing, and how easily we go to pieces on some unseen and unsuspected rock! The great chart by which we ought to steer is laid aside and forgotten, and we yield to the first cogent temptation that assails us. The unaccomplished purpose of a good and pure life haunts us until the day of our death. But this, as I have said, is a subject for

the divine, not for the essayist. Everybody knows how, in common life, the ordinary plans and projects, on the accomplishment of which he had set his heart, have egregiously failed in the issue. They may have failed owing to force of circumstances—they may have failed owing to the absence of that strength of will, that indomitable perseverance, which alone can enable a man to work out his resolves. It has been said that every smirking barrister, on first putting on his wig and gown, believes that he will be Lord High Chancellor of England; and that every young Member of Parliament, on delivering his maiden speech, believes that he will live to be Prime Minister. There is no reason why he should not, if he has ability and perseverance, and a certain command of money. But these disappointments or non-fulfilments of the aspirations of early ambition are not to be accounted among the "unaccomplished purposes" of which I am writing. There are others, however, of a more substantial character, where the disappointment comes later in life (for we are soon purged of our early vanities), where men set themselves to the work of building up great fortunes, of founding families, of sending their names down to posterity as the first constructors of that which later history may reverence and applaud. They toil early and late. From small beginnings they produce great results. Self-denial is commonly at the root of their success. Yet self-denial, in its fulness and perfection, I do not think that I ever saw. In the lives of all economical, money-making men, there is a point of reservation—there is a weak spot in the self-denying constancy of the man. Some favourite inclination must be satisfied. It may be a love of horses—it may be something worse. I knew a man—a very honest, worthy, hard-working man—most frugal and economical, speaking scorn of those who live in fine West-end houses and gave expensive dinner-parties—he himself living, for a great part of the year, over his business works at Limehouse, and limiting himself always to a glass or two of humble port. But he always kept excellent horses and rode to hounds when the exigencies of business would permit. I remember his mounting me on a long-backed chestnut mare, of great feminine impetuosity, who rushed at her fences, and nearly broke my neck. But he always gave me the plainest fare for dinner and a shake-down on his drawing-room sofa—a "spare room" being, in his opinion, a temptation. He achieved the objects of his ambition, which were but moderate: he made provision for a very fine family. I knew, still better, another man, who vowed, early in life, never to spend more than half his income—and he kept to his resolution. But, from the earliest days of my remembrance, though tied to an arduous profession, in which, with little or no education, he achieved great success, he kept a very fine stud, and was seldom absent from the meets of the Surrey hounds. He was a marvellous exemplar of well-deserved success—for he rose from very humble beginnings, and left behind him a quarter-of-a-million of money, all earned by his industry and integrity—and he might have left behind him half-a-million, but for the fact that he left also an

immense family. He might have been the founder of a great house, but there was enmity between him and his eldest son, and the fortune was scattered; and the purpose was unaccomplished.

Another history of unaccomplished purposes is that of which the inspired writer speaks, when he says, "There is an evil and it is common among men; a man to whom God had given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanted nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God granteth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it." And again: "There is a sore evil, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt; but those riches perish by evil travail; and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand." These things truly are very sad. They are what no one cannot see without deploring. I could name a lordly couple, in whom all the chivalry and the grace of the Grand Arthurian period are beautifully typified—a pair whom it would be impossible to know for a single day without love, admiration, and reverence—with high rank, with high station, with great estates, with everything that humanity could desire—in the very prime of their lives—yet wanting one thing—a direct heir. So that a stranger shall eat thereof. But how can we tell that this might not be a blessing in the end? I knew a man, some years ago, who endeared himself to many by kindnesses and courtesies, a man of the highest rank beneath royalty, who had a large family, and died broken-hearted. It would have been far better for him if he had been wifeless and childless. He might have lived to serve his country for long years, and even to take the great helm of the nation into his hand. It is sadder to think of a great name being dragged through the mire, than of its dying out, on the direct line being superseded by collaterals.

And in lower ranks of life disappointments of this kind are frequent. I had a friend of the middle-classes, who had been well, if not highly educated, devoted to literature—a close student, of an ardent nature, a dreamer of dreams, who, from his youth upwards, had one leading thought, to beget a son inheriting the paternal love of knowledge—the great desire to learn. Before he was of age, he told me, he used to have day-dreams, of the sweet delights of watching the dawning intelligence of the boy who called him father—of seeing the growing increase of knowledge, the intensifying love of literature—thinking how great a charm it would be to answer his boy's questions about Spenser, and Shakespeare, and Milton, and others of England's greatest worthies—and to talk to him about Stafford, Pym, and Hampden, his face all aglow with intellectual pleasure. Such thing must have been ere now. See that wonderful story of James and John Mill. It is a harsh, gloomy picture, and does not realise my friend's conception, butthe elder Mill, doubtless, rejoiced in the precocious development of his son. He had a purpose, and it was accomplished. With my friend it was wholly different. He did beget a son —nay, he begot several. But the dreams of his youth were never realised. Not one ever loved his books, not one made any successes at school,

not one ever cared to enquire about such "old muffs" as Chaucer and Spencer, Shakespeare and Bacon. Shooting and fishing and boating—and hunting when they could get a mount—was all that they cared for. They would not work up for any learned profession, or cram for a competitive examination. So they went off to Australia, and betook themselves to places where no books are to be found. My friend has not a large estate, but he has a large library, with no one to whom to leave it—no one who would take down a volume from the shelf (barring a sensation novel) even on the wettest day. It will be dispersed to buy horses and dogs. This was *his* unaccomplished purpose.

Unaccomplished purposes of this kind are, doubtless, common, though they take different shapes. There is General Cannon, C.B., Retired List, Artillery, who has fought in all the Indian battles of the last thirty years. It was the purpose of his life to see his only son in the profession which he erst adorned. But the present system of competitive examination destroyed all his hopes—as it has destroyed, and will destroy, the hopes of hundreds of his gallant comrades. Indeed, the number of unaccomplished purposes of which that Civil Service Commission will be the fruitful parent it is difficult to conceive. A man purposes that his son shall be a soldier or a civilian, and he spends a large part of his income in qualifying the youth for the desired profession. The youngster has a fair amount of brains, he is sent to a cramming tutor, he works hard, and meanwhile his parents have to stint themselves that they may pay the cramming bills. It is no fault of the poor boy that some who compete with him have more brains and stronger nerves, and face the examiners with more success. But he fails, and there he stands, with ruined hopes, a monument of an unaccomplished purpose. What is he to do? It is too late for him in most cases to begin again. The father has thrown away a thousand pounds or more, perhaps, out of his hardly-earned pension, and has no more money to spend. The son is downcast and disappointed, and when urged to some new effort asks, "What is the use?" Well, to say the least of it, it is very hard.

And the question asked by the boy may well be asked by the nation. "What is the use of it?" What is the use of flooding the country with all these "monuments of unaccomplished purposes;" are the Public Services better recruited than of old? The Civil Service Commissioners will answer that we must wait for years to see the results of the experiments. Our successors will see them, but middle-aged men of the present time cannot live to see them—cannot see whether we shall have better soldiers than the Wellesleys, the Hardinges, the Somersets, the Cottons, the Napiers, in the English Army—or in the Indian Army than the Malcolms, the Munros, the Lows, the Outrams, the Lawrences, the Nicholsons, the Neales, and Napier of Magdala, now at its head.

And then for those boasted Indian Civil Service Examinations, which have broken so many young hearts, and impoverished so many elderly gentlemen. Are we likely to get better Indian Civil servants than the

Elphinstones, the Metcalfes, the Edmonstones, the Adams, the Bayleys, the Grants, and others, who have consolidated our great Indian Empire? A quarter of a century hence, shall we have better men than these? It is small matter to the Civil Service Commissioners if when they are in their graves India should be lost to us. Meanwhile the country is to be deluged with monuments of unaccomplished purposes, huge disappointments, festering animosities, idle hands and active brains. See that fine passage in the *Misérables* of Victor Hugo in answer to the question, "Of what is a revolt composed?" We lay too much stress upon the fact that "Englishmen are so different from Frenchmen." We are only now beginning to be subjected to the influences which may turn our national character "Frenchwards." It may not be long, perhaps, before we see the results of those "irritated convictions, embittered enthusiasms, aroused indignations, martial instincts suppressed, . . . straitened circumstances, empty dreams, ambitions surrounded by escarpments—every man who hopes for an issue from an overthrow." Every year the number of the dangerous middle-classes increases—the disappointed candidates for place, civil or military—who have failed in the great object of their lives, wasted their time, wasted their money, and found themselves cast helpless on the world. I know a man highly educated both at Cambridge and at a cramming tutor's, who missed the Indian Civil Service by a few marks, and is now driving or pushing a costermonger's barrow. If there is no danger looming in the distance from this source of trouble, we must be a lethargic people.

Then there is another very painful aspect in which we must regard the cruelty of these Civil Service Examinations. Supposing that the purpose *is* accomplished—Well! The young man gets his military commission or his civil appointment—and there is great rejoicing, but at what cost has the success been gained? There are, doubtless, some hardy youths, with robust constitutions, strong nerves, and bright intelligences—quick learners, with retentive memories. These are the men to struggle through without injury to themselves. But they are the minority. The greater number suffer grievously during that sharp contest, and come forth feeble, pallid, emaciated—with racking headaches, clouded brains, and shattered nerves. If these youngsters, their purposes accomplished, are the same men, on entering the army, as they would have been without the help of the cramming tutors, we certainly have not to thank the Civil Service Commissioners for the fortunate result. But it is far more likely that we are pursuing a system, which will tend to fill the commissioned ranks of our army with men of enfeebled constitutions. And as to those, who have fallen by the wayside, the youths of "unaccomplished purposes"—they have, perhaps, toiled more severely than their successful competitors, because they have had less apprehensive and retentive brains, and, therefore, there has been greater necessity for them to work early and late, and to resort to wet towels and strong coffee. One youngster may take three hours to learn what another picks up in one—and yet the slower worker

partly from want of nerve, partly from failure of memory, in the dread hour of examination, may not produce it half as well as his more robust, quick-witted competitor though he really knows it much better. Then he fails; his purpose is unaccomplished, and the sharp pangs of disappointment come to aggravate the evils of the over-cramming. And this is not for a month or for a year—but for a life. Many, successful or unsuccessful, never recover. Ask members of Medical Boards what they know about it. I have asked, and the answer always is most sad.

But this has carried me into graver and sadder paths than I purposed to explore—and they are appreciable, perhaps, only by the few. I will turn to things which we all understand. Of all unaccomplished purposes the most numerous are those which spring from the determination to be "more economical in future." We find that we are living beyond our income, or putting by nothing for our children, and we determine to retrench. We will give fewer dinner-parties, or none; we will drink less wine, and give up that expensive dry champagne altogether; we will walk instead of ride, curbing the propensity to fling ourselves into Hansom-cabs on warm days; we will leave off giving costly wedding presents; we will forget the existence of Patti and Trebelli (or live on the ineffaceable memory of Maffeo Orsini), and forswear operas and theatres altogether; we will give no joint-stock little dinners at Greenwich or Richmond; and we will try to persuade our feminine belongings not to wear so many fine dresses. And if these things do not have the desired effect, we must go into a smaller house and reduce our establishment of servants. But what comes of it all? The resolution is formed in the best possible faith, but there is always some excuse for departing from it. We salve our consciences by saying, "Oh! but this is quite an exceptional case." And there are so many exceptions that they do not prove the rule, but make it. Our old friend Justus has been made a Master in Chancery, or our some-time favourite schoolfellow Martius has come home from India with the Bath and the Victoria Cross. In such exceptional circumstances a little dinner is inevitable. Then the doctor tells us that dry champagne is good for us, and we argue that it is better to submit to the expense than to be ill, and thus to curtail our powers of work. "It pays for itself in the end." Our pretty niece Camilla is about to make a good marriage, and we must give *her* a wedding present—some trifle from Howell and James's—or we shall be "unlike the rest of the family." Our married daughter, Marcella, has come up from Northumberland on a visit, and we must treat her to a box at the Opera. Then it is "all very well to talk of walking to the station on a hot day, when one gets heated and catches cold on the railway, perhaps congestion of the lungs." And as to the Richmond party, Criticus exhorts us thereto, and Criticus is a very influential reviewer, and we are bringing out a new book. It would not do to offend Criticus; and so we go on, in casuistical manner, trying to persuade ourselves that each is an exceptional case, and that everything that we do is for "our good in the end." So this

year's expenditure is not less than the last, and our economy is consigned to the limbo of unaccomplished purposes.

In connection with these broken promises is the resolution so often formed to keep our accounts more regularly and accurately, and to put down everything we spend; so much money slips away unaccounted for and gives no sign. We can regulate our expenditure so much better if we know exactly what we spend. And so we purchase a pocket account-book, and go into it with vigorous conscientiousness, putting down every fraction spent, even to the penny given to the beggar or the cross-sweeper on the road. And how proud we are when we balance the account, and find that we can make out the proceeds of our last cheque for "cash" even to a farthing! The success of this ought to be encouraging—it ought to urge us forward in our virtuous career. But we soon begin to relax—we are tired when we reach home in the evening, and we cannot remember everything next morning; and there is an *hiatus valde deflendus* in the box, and we make up the amount by the insertion of the comprehensive word "sundries," and we grow weary of the whole business, and there is an end of it—a month, at the farthest, renders this account-keeping an unaccomplished purpose. Something of the same kind—indeed, a kindred vanity—is the resolution so often formed to "keep a journal." I know some men who have done it in the most elaborate and unfailing manner, and very useful it has been to them and others. But most people fail egregiously. Even if the diary, in a pocket-book, or in one of Mr. Letts' valuable manuals, is intended to contain nothing more than—"May 15—dined with ——. Had brougham from livery-stables;" or, "May 20—new pair of boots from ——'s," it is useful as a check on one's tradesmen. Many guineas may be saved every year by keeping even such a scant diary as this. It is a great thing even to know where you were on a certain day, for if you were at Kissengen on the 20th of August you could not have had that barouche to Richmond or that new pair of "side-spring" boots, either for yourself or wife. Of course, everyone has a sort of general notion of one's whereabouts at a particular time, but I have found many people grievously at fault, on the subject of dates; and documentary evidence of any kind is better even than the best of memories. Yet, as I have said, this journal-keeping is as fallible as account-keeping—the purpose is unaccomplished—it stares us in the face, in the shape of brief fragments, which we come upon years afterwards, reminding us of our failures. This relates only to the domestic side of journal-keeping. But how many men there are who, having mixed much with the world, regret at the close of their career that they have not kept some record of their experiences—of all that they have seen and heard—of the historical personages whom they have met and conversed with—of anecdotal reminiscences, which years afterwards might be of value to the public and their families. "Ah!" they say, "if I had only done what —— and —— have done—if I had only kept steadily to my original purpose, I might have beaten them." Of course a man has no

right to complain that he is beaten; and he does not complain. He admits the truth of the maxim—*perseverantia vincit*. But how few of us can persevere! We are always forming plans and always departing from them.

Even in respect of our promised pleasures we are always halting and wavering, and never in the end bringing our purposes to the point of accomplishment. There is, for example, that visit to Italy, which I have been purposing to pay during at least five-and-twenty years. What have I done? I have sketched out the tour—studied many descriptive volumes in poetry and prose—Eustace, Beckford, Byron, Shelley, Rogers, Barratt, Browning, and others—supplemented by the meaner but more practical works of Murray and Bradshaw. Moreover, I have given several of my friends a great deal of trouble by seeking the results of their personal experiences. And all with what effect? Circumstances were against me in my prime—want of railways, want of time, want of money; and now that I am a sexagenarian and can go if I wish, I do not much care about going. There are railways and guide-books, and the journey is comparatively short, but Continental railway travelling to one somewhat wanting in health, and sadly deficient in lingual resources, is not very inviting to an old man. So I have been fain to substitute Bath for Florence, Tenby for Naples, York for Capri, and the Teign for the Arno. I am not sure that to a sick or a toil-worn man these schemes of travel have not something bracing in them. The tonic properties of hope are very invigorating. Who knows that I might not have got as much good out of the purpose as out of the fact? I might have caught a fever at Rome or been drowned, like Shelley, in the Bay of Spezzia, or taken up as a spy during the war which united Italy—or been inspired to join Garibaldi and shot. So perhaps, after all, it is better that I have never visited

> ——that land
> Where the poet's lute and the painter's hand
> Are most divine; where earth and sky
> Are picture both and poetry.

We have noble cities and lovely bays and beautiful rivers at home, and we can reach them at small expense and little trouble, and find comfortable hotels and apartments, and people speaking our own language, and everything, whether we be sick or whether we be well, to meet our requirements (including plenty of water), and there is no bustle, no excitement. You are not perpetually called upon to *do* this place or the other. You may drowse away your holiday as quietly as you like.

I am disposed to think that many monuments of unaccomplished purposes are the results of certain changes within ourselves—changes of opinion or of feeling, making us take different views of the advisability of our projects, than those which we had originally conceived. An increase of experience leads us to discover

> Some unexpected germ
> Of failure in the scheme—

the scheme which we had so much cherished. We had started from false premisses. We had not calculated the influences of changes of age and health—of changes of circumstances and conditions—which convert that which we had thought so luscious in the prospect into nothing better than "Dead Sea fruit" in the mouth. I knew a man who, when of more than middle age, had set his heart on the possession of a garden, and especially upon the culture of roses. He was a toiler in the great city, with a cottage in the suburbs, and a garden at the back not much larger than the dinner-table of a civic corporation. That little bit of garden was a delight to him. He designed it himself, he worked in it himself, he knew every flower in it. When he returned from office, on summer evenings, aided by one who loved him, it was a pleasure to him to water all his flowers. He picked the worms out of the rose-buds with his own hand; he watched the expansion of every blossom. On the cool early mornings, ere the world was astir, he would leave his writing-table at odd times to mark the progress made by his flowers under the silent stars, or the good done by the nightly rain-fall. And he praised God for giving him such a harmless source of pleasure.

But in an evil hour he began to think that what was so delightful on a small scale must be still more enjoyable on a larger one. So he took a house with nearly a couple of acres of garden-ground. He had built, for himself, a tiny little conservatory at the back of his cottage, in which he stored a few plants—and now, in his new residence, he was master of a magnificent palace of "glass." Of course he was compelled to have a gardener, with occasional help. There were flowers enough, and fruit enough, and vegetables for half-a-dozen families, but the luckless possessor soon found that nothing was his own. Everything was the gardener's—"my roses," "my grapes," "my pears," &c. If the master, to amuse himself, put a prod into the earth to see how the potatoes were coming on, his highness the gardener scowled. If his master made any suggestion to him, he was sure either openly to argue the point in a supercilious manner, as if the governor were a fool, or tacitly to disobey his orders. So my friend took another gardener. Though an honester and a pleasanter fellow, he was much of the same type. Everything was his, not his master's. The potatoes were never fit to be dug, the peas were never fit to be picked, the carrots were never fit to be pulled. Even if the flowers, which were multitudinous, were wanted for the decoration of the house, they were grudgingly given, and the idea of sending some flowers and fruit to a neighbour or to a distant friend was pure sacrilege. Then his pears and plums disappeared mysteriously in the night, with or without the knowledge of the gardener; and at last my friend said to me with something like an oath, "After all, the greengrocer is better." It was certainly cheaper and less aggravating. The gardener cost him twice as much as he had calculated. What with purchase of fresh plants, loads of manure, fuel and repairs to the glass-houses, it would have been a costly pleasure to a man of modest means, but it

was not a pleasure under these altered conditions; so he soon began to deplore the mistake he had made, to wish himself back in his little cottage and his garden the size of a table-cloth.

Then it happened that the "fortunate" possessor of the garden, which everyone admired and envied, fell sick and was compelled to be absent, in search of health, during the greater part of the summer. Sick men are notoriously capricious. So when he returned at intervals to his own house, he looked upon all his bright pastures of flowers not with mere passive indifference, but with something approaching active dislike. He could seldom be induced to tread his garden-walks, and a bunch of roses presented to him by the hand of affection had no more charm for him than if they had been onions. He seemed to be haunted by the continual presence of an "unaccomplished purpose." The sight of the gardener was as of a grim apparition to him. He would as soon have lived in the Black Country. It was a relief to him to get away—to a London lodging, to apartments at the seaside—"anywhere, anywhere out of" his home. There was, perhaps, a little touch of mania in this, but it all came out of the sickening sense of disappointment—the feeling that the more money he spent the less enjoyment he had of his flowers—that he had reared for himself a monument of an unaccomplished purpose, and that he was fain to fly away from the sight of it.

This, perhaps, if not an exceptional case, is one of no very frequent recurrence—though, indeed, many men have been happier in their small houses with their small gardens than as possessors of lands and tenements of much larger dimensions. But how numerous are the instances of men who have in early life had an entire desire to be rich—who have spent all their best years in money-making—who have been happy and proud and exulting, when for the first time they have found themselves with a hundred pounds to the good. Next year, perhaps, their banking books show a balance of two hundred pounds. Then comes the grand idea of investing! How proud is the invester! He has money in the funds. His business is going on prosperously. It has every prospect of increasing. He thinks that he may take a wife, at no very distant period. He has some nice girl in the prospect—and, after another year, he will be able to furnish a little house in the suburbs and commence house-keeping on his own account. All this is pure happiness to him. His early dreams are realised. He has got his little wife, a modest, thrifty, unassuming young woman, good-tempered and easily pleased. The little house and the little garden are all that they can wish—and, as the income continues to increase, they can allow themselves fresh comforts. But, after a time, there comes in a sharp desire to save—little children enter the world and they must be provided for. Still there is enough of income to provide every comfort—and they go on very happily in a larger house and with a slightly-increased establishment. But after a time the man really becomes rich; he takes a still larger house; he lives in a grander style, in a more fashionable neighbourhood; he has servants, and he gives dinner parties

with good wine, and there are a thousand nameless, unintelligible sources of expenditure which frighten him grievously.

If a man thinks that by taking a new house, twice the size and rent of his old, doubles the number of his servants and the number of his horses, at only double the cost of his former establishment, he is very much mistaken. Expenses beget expenses. So the poor man, who lived so happily in his small way, is now, in his great way, tortured with doubts and fears. There may be no occasion for them; but it is well known that many men with large means have fretted themselves to death with the maniacal thought that they would end their days in the mad-house. Our friend was not so insane as this; but he felt, every day, that he had been happier in his suburban residence. He missed the friends and neighbours who dropped in on summer evenings to smoke a cigar in the back garden, and to talk over the day's news. He felt out of place and uncomfortable, like a man whose clothes are too large for him. His greatest comfort was that his wife thoroughly agreed with him, for most wives delight in increased grandeur, whatever their husbands may think. So the end of it was, that the good man became rich, the dream of his youth was realised, and yet it was an "unaccomplished purpose" after all, for he had been happier with his modest competence.

But I have no doubt that many of these unaccomplished purposes have their compensations. We do not know how it would have been if the out-turn had been different. We might have been less happy if we had succeeded. We have seen many of our contemporaries eager in money-making—living in splendid houses, driving fine carriages, chairmen or members of boards—flushed with the thought of new speculations, which "must succeed"—whilst we loiter on, in our lazy fashion, speculating not at all, but seeking modest profits only from legitimate sources, and living in a hum-drum sort of way upon them. We have very soon reason to rejoice. A smash comes: the great companies collapse; the grand new speculations turn out costly failures; the "fortunate" dweller in Belgravia sells his furniture and horses, perhaps his wife's jewels—shuts up his house and subsides, lucky if he can go into peaceful retirement, without being howled and screeched at by those whom he has ruined. Happy would it have been for him, if his purposes had been unaccomplished. Happy would it have been for him, if he had burnt his fingers at the outset, and halted in his mad career of speculation. Again, a man's failures have a sobering influence upon his character. He has learnt to value himself at his true worth. He knows the extent of his powers. He does not aim at anything beyond the exact point to which he feels that he is capable of advancing. All the old restlessnes passes away from him; he is quiet, peaceful, content. His purposes are unaccomplished, but he is happy. If he can see in his unaccomplished purposes the hand of God, and he can say "The Almighty knows what is good for me," then there is clear gain. In truth, there is nothing but this that can

really reconcile us to our failures. Infinite consolation is offered to him, if he will only receive it. "All God's providences, all God's dealings with us, all His judgments, mercies, warnings, deliverances tend to peace and repose as their ultimate issue. All our troubles and pleasures here, all our anxieties, fears, doubts, difficulties, hopes, encouragements, afflictions, losses, attainments tend this one way. After the fever of life, after weariness, sicknesses, fightings and despondings, languor and fretfulness, struggling and succeeding; after all the chances and changes of this troubled state, at length comes death, at length the white throne of God, at length the Beatific Vision." This from one of Newman's sermons, and very true and beautiful it is. And another writer says, "And so as you pass on, stage by stage, in your courses of experience, it is made clear to you that whatever you have laid upon you to do or to suffer, whatever to surrender or to conquer, is exactly the best for us."* In this light viewing all things we cannot despond. We have failed, but we are determined never to go into battle again.

There are few men who do not feel painfully in their heart of hearts, that they themselves have been failures, and who do not know the causes of it. But the outside world does not know it. Some men were talking one day about failures, when one present, with no mock-modesty, but with a profound sense of the truth which he was uttering, said, "I am the greatest failure of all." Others thought that he was only jesting or seeking a compliment, for he had gained honours from his sovereign and applause from the public. But he knew that he ought to have done more: he knew what numbers of hours he had wasted; he knew that he had often given himself up to pleasure, not always of the most harmless kind, when he ought to have given it up to work; he had not turned his opportunities to the best account. He was not an ambitious man; he was perfectly contented with what he had got. Sometimes, indeed, he thought that he had got more than he deserved. It might or might not have been so. His friends prophesied further distinctions. He shook his head. He would not ask for them; he did not want them. So he passed on, seeking nothing, striving not at all; and whether his purposes were accomplished or unaccomplished, he was perfectly content. And he grew more so when the faith found entrance into his heart, that all things, under God's hand, are for the best; that whatever our crosses may be, they may be borne lightly, with the thought that some good will surely come out of them. "I shall see, some day," he says, "that this is for my good," and that there are few of us, in this belief, who do not, sooner or later, see that it is so.

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* "The New Life." Both passages are taken from a little volume called "Rays of Sunlight for Dark Days," compiled by Dr. Vaughan, Master of the Temple. There should be a copy of it in every house.

THE WHITE FIGURE OF A LADY SUDDENLY APPEARED AT THE DOOR.

Three Feathers.

CHAPTER V.

Throwing a Fly.

HARRY TRELYON had a cousin named Juliott Penaluna, who lived at Penzance with her father, an irascible old clergyman, who, while yet a poor curate, had the good fortune to marry Mrs. Trelyon's sister. Miss Juliott was a handsome, healthy, English-looking girl, with blue eyes and brown hair, frank enough in her ways, fairly well-read, fond of riding and driving, and very specially fond of her cousin. There had never been any concealment about that. Master Harry, too, liked his cousin in a way, as he showed by his rudeness to her; but he used plainly to tell her that he would not marry her; whereupon she would be angry with him for his impertinence, and end by begging him to be good friends again. At last she went, as her mother had done before her, and encouraged the attentions of a fair, blue-eyed, pensive young curate, who was full of beautiful enthusiasms and idealisms, in which he sought to interest the mind of this exceedingly practical young woman, who liked cliff-hunting, and had taught herself to swim in the sea. Just before she pledged her future to him, she wrote to Harry Trelyon, plainly warning him of what was going to happen. In a fashion she asked for his advice. It was a

timid letter for her to write, and she even showed some sentiment in it. The reply, written in a coarse, sprawling, schoolboy hand, was as follows:—

"Trelyon Hall, Monday Afternoon.

"Dear Jue,—All right. You're a fool to marry a parson. What would you like for a wedding present?

"Affectionately yours,

"HARRY TRELYON."

Posts don't go very fast in Cornwall; but, just as soon as a letter from Penzance could reach him, Master Harry had his answer. And it was this:—

"The Hollies, Penzance, Wednesday.

"Dear Harry,—I am glad to receive a letter from you in which there is no ill-spelling. There is plenty of ill-temper, however, as usual. You may send your wedding presents to those who care for them: I don't.

"JULIOTT PENALUNA."

Master Harry burst into a roar of laughter when he received that letter; but, all the same, he could not get his cousin to write him a line for months thereafter. Now, however, she had come to visit some friends at Wadebridge; and she agreed to drive over and join Mrs. Trelyon's little dinner-party, to which Mr. Roscorla had also been invited. Accordingly, in the afternoon, when Harry Trelyon was seated on the stone steps outside the Hall door, engaged in making artificial flies, Miss Penaluna drove up in a tiny chariot drawn by a beautiful little pair of ponies; and when the boy had jumped down and gone to the ponies' heads, and when she had descended from the carriage, Master Harry thought it was time for him to lay aside his silk, rosin, feathers, and what not, and go forward to meet her.

"How are you, Jue?" he said, offering to kiss her, as was his custom; "and where's your young man?"

She drew back, offended; and then she looked at him, and shrugged her shoulders, and gave him her cheek to kiss. He was only a boy, after all.

"Well, Harry, I am not going to quarrel with you," she said, with a good-natured smile; "although I suppose I shall have plenty of cause before I go. Are you as rude as ever? Do you talk as much slang as ever?"

"I like to hear *you* talk of slang!" he said. "Who calls her ponies Brandy and Soda? Weren't you wild, Jue, when Captain Tulliver came up and said, '*Miss Penaluna, how are your dear Almonds and Raisins?*'"

"If I had given him a cut with my whip, I should have made him dance," said Miss Juliott, frankly; "then he would have forgotten to turn out his toes. Harry, go and see if that boy has taken in my things."

"I won't. There's plenty of time; and I want to talk to you. I say, Jue, what made you go and get engaged down in Penzance? Why didn't you cast your eye in this direction?"

"Well, of all the impertinent things that I ever heard!" said Miss Juliott, very much inclined to box his ears. "Do you think I ever thought of marrying *you?*"

"Yes, I do," he said, coolly; "and you would throw over that parson in a minute, if I asked you—you know you would, Jue. But I'm not good enough for you."

"Indeed, you are not," she said, with a toss of the head. "I would take you for a gamekeeper, but not for a husband."

"Much need you'll have of a gamekeeper when you become Mrs. Tressider!" said he, with a rude laugh. "But I didn't mean myself, Jue. I meant that if you were going to marry a parson, you might have come here and had a choice. We can show you all sorts at this house—fat and lean, steeples and beer-barrels, bandy-legged and knock-kneed, whichever you like—you'll always find an ample assortment on these elegant premises. The stock is rather low, just now,—I think w'eve only two or three; but you're supplied already, ain't you, Jue? Well, I never expected it of you. You were a good sort of chap at one time; but I suppose you can't climb trees any more now. There, I'll let you go into the house; all the servants are waiting for you. If you see my grandmother, tell her she must sit next me at dinner—if a parson sits next me, I'll kill him."

Just as Miss Juliott passed into the Hall, a tall, fair-haired, gentle-faced woman, dressed wholly in white, and stepping very softly and silently, came down the staircase, so that, in the twilight, she almost appeared to be some angel descending from heaven. She came forward to her visitor with a smile on the pale and wistful face, and took her hand and kissed her on the forehead; after which, and a few words of enquiry, Miss Penaluna was handed over to the charge of a maid. The tall, fair woman passed noiselessly on, and went into a chamber at the further end of the hall, and shut the door; and, presently, the low, soft tones of a harmonium were heard, appearing to come from some considerable distance, and yet filling the house with a melancholy and slumberous music.

Surely it could not be this gentle music which brought to Master Harry's face a most un-Christian scowl? What harm could there be in a solitary widow wrapping herself up in her imaginative sorrow, and saturating the whole of her feeble, impressionable, and withal kindly nature with a half-religious, half-poetic sentiment? What although those days which she devoted to services in memory of her relatives who were dead—and, most of all, in memory of her husband, whom she had really loved—resembled, in some respects, the periods in which an opium-eater resolves to give himself up to the strange and beautiful sensations beyond which he can imagine no form of happiness? Mrs. Trelyon was nothing of a zealot or devotee. She held no particular doctrines; she did not even countenance High Church usages, except in so far as music and

painting and dim religious lights aided her endeavours to produce a species of exalted intoxication. She did not believe herself to be a wicked sinner, and she could not understand the earnest convictions and pronounced theology of the Dissenters around her. But she drank of religious sentiment as other persons drink in beautiful music; and all the aids she could bring to bear in producing this feeling of blind ecstacy she had collected together in the private chapel attached to Trelyon Hall. At this very moment she was seated there alone. The last rays of the sun shone through narrow windows of painted glass, and carried beautiful colours with them into the dusk of the curiously-furnished little building. She herself sate before a large harmonium, and there was a stain of rose-colour and of violet on the white silk costume that she wore. It was one of her notions that, though black might well represent the grief immediately following the funeral of one's friends, pure white was the more appropriate mourning when one had become accustomed to their loss, and had turned one's eyes to the shining realms which they inhabit. Mrs. Trelyon never went out of mourning for her husband, who had been dead over a dozen years; but the mourning was of pure white, so that she wandered through the large and empty rooms of Trelyon Hall, or about the grounds outside, like a ghost; and, like a ghost, she was ordinarily silent, and shy, and light-footed. She was not much of a companion for the rude, impetuous, self-willed boy whose education she had handed over to grooms and gamekeepers and to his own very pronounced instincts.

The frown that came over the lad's handsome face as he sate on the door-step, resuming his task of making trout-flies, was caused by the appearance of a clergyman, who came walking forward from one of the hidden paths in the garden. There was nothing really distressing or repulsive about the look of this gentleman; although, on the other hand, there was nothing very attractive. He was of middle age and middle height; he wore a rough brown beard and moustache; his face was grey and full of lines; his forehead was rather narrow; and his eyes were shrewd and watchful. But for that occasional glance of the eyes, you would have taken him for a very ordinary, respectable, common-place person, not deserving of notice, except for the length of his coat. When Master Harry saw him approach, however, a diabolical notion leapt into the young gentleman's head. He had been practising the throwing of flies against the wind; and on the lawn were the several pieces of paper, at different distances, at which he had aimed, while the slender trout-rod, with a bit of line and a fly at the end of it still dangling, was close by his hand. Instantaneously he put the rod against the wall, so that the hook was floating in front of the door just about the height of a man's head. Would the Rev. Mr. Barnes look at the door-steps, rather than in front of him, in passing into the house, and so find an artificial fly fastened in his nose? Mr. Barnes was no such fool.

"It is a pleasant afternoon, Mr. Trelyon," he said, in grave and measured accents, as he came up.

Harry Trelyon nodded, as he smoothed out a bit of red-silk thread. Then Mr. Barnes went forward, carefully put aside the dangling fly, and went into the house.

"The fish won't rise to-night," said Master Harry to himself, with a grin on his face. "But parsons don't take the fly readily; you've got to catch them with bait; and the bait they like best is a widow's mite. And now, I suppose, I must go and dress for dinner; and don't I wish I was going down to Mrs. Rosewarne's parlour instead!"

But another had secured a better right to go into Mrs. Rosewarne's parlour.

CHAPTER VI.

THE —— AMONG THE TAILORS.

THIS other gentleman was also dressing for Mrs. Trelyon's dinner-party, and he was in a pleased frame of mind. Never before, indeed, had Mr. Roscorla been so distinctly and consciously happy. That forenoon, when his anxiety had become almost distressing—partly because he honestly liked Wenna Rosewarne and wanted to marry her, and partly because he feared the mortification of a refusal—her letter had come; and, as he read the trembling, ingenuous, and not-very-well-composed lines and sentences, a great feeling of satisfaction stole over him, and he thanked her a thousand times, in his heart, for having given him this relief. And he was the more pleased that it was so easy to deal with a written consent. He was under no embarrassment as to how he should express his gratitude, or as to whether he ought to kiss her. He could manage correspondence better than a personal interview. He sate down and wrote her a very kind and even affectionate letter, telling her that he would not intrude himself too soon upon her, especially as he had to go up to Trelyon Hall that evening; and saying, too, that, in any case, he could never expect to tell her how thankful he was to her. That she would find out from his conduct to her during their married life.

But, to his great surprise, Mr. Roscorla found that the writing and sending off of that letter did not allay the extraordinary nervous excitement that had laid hold of him. He could not rest. He called in his housekeeper, and rather astonished that elderly person by saying he was much pleased with her services, and thereupon he presented her with a sovereign to buy a gown. Then he went into the garden, and meant to occupy himself with his flowers; but he found himself staring at them without seeing them. Then he went back to his parlour and took a glass of sherry to steady his nerves—but in vain. Then he thought he would go down to the inn, and ask to see Wenna; but again he changed his mind, for how was he to meet the rest of the family without being prepared for the interview? Probably he never knew how he passed these two or three hours: but at length the time came for him to dress for dinner.

And, as he did so, the problem that occupied his mind was to discover the probable reasons that had induced Wenna Rosewarne to promise to be his wife. Had her parents advised her to marry a man who could at least render her future safe? Or, had she taken pity on his loneliness, and been moved by some hope of reforming his ways and habits of thinking? Or, had she been won over by his pictures of her increased influence among the people around her? He could not tell. Perhaps, he said to himself, she said yes because she had not the courage to say no. Perhaps she had been convinced by his arguments that the wild passion of love, for which youth is supposed to long, is a dangerous thing; and was there not constantly before her eyes an example of the jealousy, and quarrelling, and misery that may follow that fatal delirium? Or, it might be—and here Mr. Roscorla more nearly approached the truth—that this shy, sensitive, self-distrustful girl had been so surprised to find herself of any importance to any one, and so grateful to him for his praise of her, and for this highest mark of appreciation that a man can bestow, that her sudden gratitude softened her heart, and disposed her to yield to his prayer. And who could tell but that this present feeling might lead to a still warmer feeling, under the generous influence of a constant kindness and appreciation? It was with something of wonder and almost of dismay—and with a wholly new sense of his own unworthiness—that Mr. Roscorla found himself regarding the possibility of his winning a young girl's first love.

Never before in his life—not even in his younger days, when he had got a stray hint that he would probably meet a duchess and her three daughters at a particular party—had he dressed with so much care. He was, on the whole, well pleased with himself. He had to admit that his grey hair was changing to white; but many people considered white hair, with a hale complexion, rather an ornament than otherwise. For the rest, he resolved that he would never dress again to go to any party to which Miss Wenna Rosewarne was not also invited. He would not decorate himself for mere strangers and acquaintances.

He put on a light top-coat and went out into the quiet summer evening. There was a scent of roses in the air, and the great Atlantic was beautiful and still; it was a time for lovers to be walking through twilit woods, or in honeysuckle lanes, rather than for a number of people, indifferent to each other, to sit down to the vulgar pleasures of the table. He wished that Wenna Rosewarne had been of that party.

There were two or three children at his gate—bright-cheeked, clean, and well-clad, as all the Eglosilyan children are—and when they saw him come out, they ran away. He was ashamed of this; for, if Wenna had seen it, she would have been grieved. He called on them to come back; they stood in the road, not sure of him. At length a little woman of six came timidly along to him, and looked at him with her big, wondering, blue eyes. He patted her head, and asked her name, and then he put his hand in his pocket. The others, finding that their ambassador

had not been beheaded on the spot, came up also, and formed a little circle, a cautious yard or two off.

"Look here," he said to the eldest; "here is a shilling, and you go and buy sweetmeats, and divide them equally among you. Or, wait a bit —come along with me, the whole of you, and we'll see whether Mrs. Deane has got any cake for you."

He drove the flock of them into that lady's kitchen, much to her consternation, and there he left them. But he had not got half way through the little garden again, when he turned back, and went to the door, and called in to the children—

"Mind, you can swing on the gate whenever you like, so long as you take care and don't hurt yourselves."

And so he hurried away again; and he hoped that some day, when he and Wenna Rosewarne were passing, she would see the children swinging on his gate, and she would be pleased that they did not run away.

Your Polly has never been false, she declares—

he tried to hum the air, as he had often heard Wenna hum it, as he walked rapidly down the hill, and along a bit of the valley, and then up one of the great gorges lying behind Eglosilyan. He had avoided the road that went by the inn; he did not wish to see any of the Rosewarnes just then. Moreover, his rapid walking was not to save time, for he had plenty of that; but to give himself the proud assurance that he was still in excellent wind. Miss Wenna must not imagine that she was marrying an old man. Give him but as good a horse as Harry Trelyon's famous Dick, and he would ride that dare-devil young gentleman for a wager to Launceston and back. Why, he had only arrived at that period when a sound constitution reaches its maturity. Old, or even elderly? He switched at weeds with his cane, and was conscious that he was in the prime of life.

At the same time, he did not like the notion of younger men than himself lounging about Mrs. Rosewarne's parlour; and he thought he might just as well give Harry Trelyon a hint that Wenna Rosewarne was engaged. An excellent opportunity was offered him at this moment; for as he went up through the grounds to the front of the Hall, he found Master Harry industriously throwing a fly at certain bits of paper on the lawn. He had resumed this occupation, after having gone inside and dressed, as a handy method of passing the time until his cousin Juliott should appear.

"How do you do, Trelyon?" said Mr. Roscorla, in a friendly way; and Harry nodded. "I wish I could throw a fly like you. By-the-bye, I have a little bit of news for you—for yourself alone, mind."

"All right; fire away," said Master Harry, still making the fine line of the trout-rod whistle through the air.

"Well, it is rather a delicate matter, you know. I don't want it talked about; but the fact is, I am going to marry Miss Rosewarne."

There was no more aiming at those bits of paper. The tall and handsome lad turned and stared at his companion as if the latter had been a maniac; and then he said—

"Miss Rosewarne? Wenna Rosewarne?"

"Yes," said Mr. Roscorla, distinctly conscious that Harry Trelyon was regarding his white hair and general appearance.

The younger man said nothing more, but began to whistle in an absent way; and then, just as if Mr. Roscorla had no existence whatever, he proceeded to reel in the line of his rod, he fastened the fly to one of the rings, and then walked off.

"You'll find my mother inside," he said; and so Mr. Roscorla went into the Hall, and was soon in Mrs. Trelyon's drawing-room, among her six or eight guests.

Harry Trelyon did not appear until dinner was announced; and then he was just in time to take his grandmother in. He took care, also, to have his cousin Juliott on his other side; and, to both of these ladies, it was soon apparent that something had occurred to put Master Harry into one of his most insolent and rebellious moods.

"Harry?" said his mother, from the other end of the table, as an intimation that he should say grace.

There was no response, despite Miss Juliott's appealing look; and so Mrs. Trelyon had to turn for assistance to one of the clergymen near her, who went through the prescribed form.

"Isn't it shocking?" said Miss Penaluna, across the table, to Harry's grandmother, who was not nearly so severe on him, for such conduct, as she ought to have been.

"Grace before meat takes too much for granted," said the young man, with a cool impudence. "How can you tell whether you are thankful until you see what sort of dinner it is? And what's the use of feeding a dog, and barking yourself? Ain't there three parsons down there?"

Miss Juliott, being engaged to a clergyman, very naturally resented this language; and the two cousins had rather a stormy fight, at the end of which Master Harry turned to his grandmother and declared that she was the only woman of common sense he had ever known.

"Well, it runs in the blood, Harry," said the old lady, "that dislike to clergymen; and I never could find out any reason for it, except when your grandfather hunted poor Mr. Pascoe that night. Dear, dear! what a jealous man your grandfather was, to be sure; and the way he used to pet me when I told him I never saw the man I'd look at after seeing him. Dear, dear!—and the day he sold those two manors to the Company, you know, he came back at night and said I was as good a wife as any in England—he did, indeed—and the bracelet he gave me then, that shall go to your wife on your wedding-day, Harry, I promise you, and you won't find its match about this part of the country, I can tell you. But don't you go and sell the lordship of Trelyon. Many a time your grandfather was asked to sell it, and he did well by selling the other two; but

Trelyon he would never sell, nor your father, and I hope you won't either, Harry. Let them work the quarries for you—that is fair enough—and give you your royalty; but don't part with Trelyon, Harry, for you might as well be parting with your own name."

"Well, I can't, grandmother, you know; but I am fearfully in want of a big lump of money, all the same."

"Money? what do you want with a lot of money? You're not going to take to gambling or horse-racing, are you?"

"I can't tell you what I want it for—not at present, any way," said the lad, looking rather gloomy; and, with that, the subject dropped, and a brief silence ensued at that end of the table.

Mr. Tressider, however, the mild and amiable young curate to whom Miss Juliott was engaged, having been rather left out in the cold, struck in at this moment, blushing slightly.

"I heard you say something about the lordships of manors," he observed, addressing himself rather to Trelyon's grandmother. "Did it ever occur to you what a powerful thing a word from William the Conqueror must have been, when it could give to a particular person and his descendants absolute possession of a piece of the globe?"

Mrs. Trelyon stared at the young man. Had a relative of hers gone and engaged herself to a dangerous Revolutionary, who, in the guise of a priest, dared to trifle with the tenure of land? Mr. Tressider was as innocent of any such intention as the babe unborn; but he was confused by her look of astonishment, he blushed more violently than before, and only escaped from his embarrassment by the good services of Miss Penaluna, who turned the whole matter into ridicule, and asked what William the Conqueror was about when he let a piece of the world come into the hands of Harry Trelyon.

"And how deep down have you a hold on it, Harry?" she said. "How far does your right over the minerals of the earth extend? From the surface right down to the centre?"

Mr. Tressider was smiling vaguely when Master Harry's eye fell upon him. What harm had the young clergyman, or any other clergyman present, done him, that he should have felt a sudden dislike to that ingenuous smile?

"Oh, no," said Trelyon, with a careless impertinence, and loud enough for two or three to hear. "William the Conqueror didn't allow the rights of the lord of the manor to extend right down to the middle of the earth. There were a good many clergymen about him; and they reserved that district for their own purposes."

"Harry," said his cousin to him, in a low voice; "is it your wish to insult me? If so, I will leave the room."

"Insult you," he said, with a laugh. "Why, Jue, you must be out of your senses. What concern have you in that warmish region?"

"I don't appreciate jokes on such subjects. My father is a clergyman, my husband will be a clergyman——"

"The greater fool you," he observed, frankly, but so that no one could hear.

"Harry," she said; "what do you mean by your dislike to clergymen?"

"Is that a conundrum?" said the unregenerate youth.

For a moment, Miss Penaluna seemed really vexed and angry; but she happened to look at Master Harry, and, somehow, her displeasure subsided into a look of good-natured resignation. There was the least little shrug of the shoulders; and then she turned to her neighbour on the right, and began to talk about ponies.

It was certainly not a pleasant dinner-party for those who sate near this young gentleman, who was more outrageously rude and capricious than ever, except when addressing his grandmother, to whom he was always courteous, and even roughly affectionate. That old lady eyed him narrowly, and could not quite make out what was the matter. Had he been privately engaged in some betting transaction that he should want this money?

When the ladies left the room, Trelyon asked Mr. Roscorla to take his place for a few minutes, and send round the wines; and then he went out and called his mother aside into the study.

"Mother," he said, "Mr. Roscorla is going to marry Wenna Rosewarne."

The tall, fair, pale lady did not seem much startled by the news. She had very little acquaintance with the affairs of the village; but she knew at least that the Rosewarnes kept the inn, and she had, every Sunday morning, seen Mrs. Rosewarne and her two daughters come into church.

"That is the elder one, is it not, who sings in the choir?"

"It's the elder one," said Master Harry, who knew less about the choir.

"It is a strange choice for Mr. Roscorla to make," she observed. "I have always considered him very fastidious, and rather proud of his family. But some men take strange fancies in choosing a wife."

"Yes, and some women take precious strange fancies in choosing a husband," said the young man, rather warmly. "Why, she's worth twenty dozen of him. I don't know what the dickens made her listen to the old fool—it is a monstrous shame, that's what I call it. I suppose he's frightened the girl into it, or bought over her father, or made himself a hypocrite, and got some parson to intercede, and scheme, and tell lies for him."

"Harry," said his mother; "I don't understand why you should interest yourself in the matter."

"Oh, don't you? Well, it's only this—that I consider that girl to be the best sort of woman I've met yet—that's all; and, I'll tell you what I mean to do, mother—I mean to give her five thousand pounds, so that she shan't come to that fellow in a dependent way, and let him give himself airs over her because he's been born a gentleman."

"Five thousand pounds!" Mrs. Trelyon repeated, wondering whether her son had drank too much wine at dinner.

"Well, but look here, mother," he said, quite prepared for her astonishment. "You know I've spent very little—I've never spent anything like what I'm entitled to; and next year I shall be of age: and all I want now, is for you to help me to get a release, you know; and I am sure I shall be able to persuade old Colonel Ransome to it, for he'll see it is not any bit of extravagance on my part—speculation, or anything of that sort, you know——"

"My dear child," said Mrs. Trelyon, startled, for once, into earnestness, "you will make people believe you are mad. To give five thousand pounds to the daughter of an innkeeper, a perfect stranger, as a marriage dowry—why, Harry, what do you think people would say of such a thing? What would they say of her?"

He looked puzzled for a moment, as though he did not understand her. It was but for a moment. "If you mean what one of those parsons would say of her," he said, impetuously, while a sudden flash of anger sprang to his face, "I don't care; but my answer to it would be to kick him round the grounds and out at the gate. Do you think I'd care a brass farthing for anything these cringing sneaks might say of her, or of me, or of anybody? And would they dare to say it if you asked her here, and made a friend of her?"

"Make a friend of her!" repeated Mrs. Trelyon, almost mechanically. She did not know what length this terrible son of hers might not go.

"If she is going to marry a friend of yours, why not?"

"Harry, you are most unreasonable—if you will think it over for a moment, you will see how this is impossible. If Mr. Roscorla marries this girl, that is his own affair; he will have society enough at home, without wishing to go out and dine. He is doing it with his eyes open, you may be sure: he has far more knowledge of such affairs than you can have. How could I single out this girl from her family to make her a friend? I should have to ask her parents and her sister to come here also, unless you wish her to come on sufferance, and throw a reflection on them."

She spoke quite calmly, but he would not listen to her. He chafed and fidgeted, and said, as soon as she had finished—

"You could do it very well, if you liked. When a woman is willing she can always smooth matters down, and you might have that girl as a companion for you, and a much better companion than a lot of long-coated sneaks of parsons."

Mrs. Trelyon flushed slightly, and said, with clear emphasis:

"I presume that I am best fitted to say what society I shall keep; and I shall have no acquaintance thrust upon me whom I would rather not recognise."

"Oh, very well," said the lad, with the proud lips giving evidence of some sudden decision. "And you won't help me to get that five thousand pounds?"

"I will not. I will not countenance any such folly."

"Then I shall have to raise the money myself."

He rang a bell, and a servant appeared.

"Tell Jakes to saddle Dick and bring him round directly."

His mother let him have his own way, without word or question; for she was deeply offended, and her feeble and sensitive nature had risen in protest against his tyranny. He went off to put on a pair of riding boots and a top-coat; and by-and-by he came down into the hall again, and went to the door. The night was dark, but clear; there was a blaze of stars overhead; all the world seemed to be quivering with those white throbs of fire. The horse and groom stood at the door, their dusky figures being scarcely blacker than the trees and bushes around. Harry Trelyon buttoned up the collar of his light top-coat, took his switch in his hand, and sprung into the saddle. At the same moment the white figure of a lady suddenly appeared at the door, and came down a step or two, and said—

"Harry, where are you going?"

"To Plymouth first," the young man answered, as he rode off; "to London afterwards, and then to the devil!"

CHAPTER VII.

Some New Experiences.

When the first shock of fear and anxiety was over, Wenna Rosewarne discovered to her great delight that her engagement was a very pleasant thing. The ominous doubts and regrets that had beset her mind when she was asked to become Mr. Roscorla's wife seemed to disappear like clouds from a morning sky; and then followed a fair and happy day, full of abundant satisfaction and calm. With much inward ridicule of her own vanity, she found herself nursing a notion of her self-importance, and giving herself airs as if she were already a married woman. Although the engagement was kept a profound secret, the mere consciousness that she had attained to this position in the world lent a new assurance to her as she went about the village. She was gifted with a new authority over despondent mothers, and fractious children, and selfish fathers, as she went her daily rounds; and even in her own home Wenna had more attention paid to her, now that she was going to marry Mr. Roscorla.

There was but one dissentient, and that was Mabyn Rosewarne, who fumed and fretted about the match, and sometimes was like to cry over it, and at other times grew vastly indignant, and would have liked to have gone and given Mr. Roscorla a bit of her mind. She pitied her poor weak sister for having been coaxed into an engagement by this designing old man; and the poor weak sister was vastly amused by her compassion, and was too good-natured to laugh at the valiant protection which this courageous young creature of sixteen offered her. Wenna let

her sister say what she pleased about herself or her future, and used no other argument to stop angry words than a kiss, so long as Mabyn spoke respectfully of Mr. Roscorla. But this was precisely what Miss Mabyn was disinclined to do; and the consequence was that their interviews were generally ended by Wenna becoming indignant, drawing herself up, and leaving the room. Then Mabyn would follow, and make up the quarrel, and promise never to offend again; but all the same she cherished a deadly animosity towards Mr. Roscorla in her heart, and, when her sister was not present, she amused her father and shocked her mother by giving a series of imitations of Mr. Roscorla's manner which that gentleman would scarcely like to have seen.

The young lady, however, soon invented what she considered a far more effectual means of revenging herself on Mr. Roscorla. She never left Wenna's side. No sooner did the elder sister prepare to go out, than Miss Mabyn discovered that she, too, would like a walk; and she so persistently did this that Wenna soon took it for granted that her sister would go with her wherever she went, and invariably waited for her. Accordingly Mr. Roscorla never by any chance went walking with Wenna Rosewarne alone; and the younger sister—herself too sulky to enter into conversation with him—used to enjoy the malicious pleasure of watching him shape his talk to suit the presence of a third person. For of course Miss Mabyn had read in books of the beautiful manner in which lovers speak to each other, and of their tender confidences as they sit by the sea or go rambling through the summer woods. Was not the time opportune for these idyllic ways? All the uplands were yellowed with tall-standing corn; the sea was as blue and as still as the sky overhead; the gardens of Eglosilyan were sweet with honeysuckle and moss-roses, and in the evenings a pale pink mist hung around the horizon, while the silver sickle of the moon came up into the violet sky, and the first pale stars appeared in the east.

"If our Wenna had a proper sort of lover," Miss Mabyn used to say to herself, bitterly, "wouldn't I scheme to have them left alone! I would watch for them like a watch-dog, that no one should come near them, and I should be as proud of him as Wenna herself; and how happy she would be in talking to me about him! But this horrid old wretch—I wish he would fall over Black Cliff some day!"

She was not aware that, in becoming the constant companion of her sister, she was affording this dire enemy of hers a vast amount of relief. Mr. Roscorla was in every way satisfied with his engagement; the more he saw of Wenna Rosewarne, the more he admired her utter self-forgetfulness, and liked a quaint and shy sort of humour that interfused her talk and her ways; but he greatly preferred not to be alone with her. He was then beset by some vague impression that certain things were demanded of him, in the character of a lover, which were exceedingly embarrassing; and which, if he did not act the part well, might awaken her ridicule. On the other hand, if he omitted all those

things, might she not be surprised by his lack of affection, begin to suspect him, and end by disliking him? Yet he knew that not for ten thousand worlds could he muster up courage to repeat one line of sentimental poetry to her.

He had never even had the courage to kiss her. He knew that this was wrong. In his own house he reflected that a man engaged to a woman ought surely to give her some such mark of his affection—say, in bidding her good-night; and thereupon Mr. Roscorla would resolve that, as he left the inn that evening, he would endeavour to kiss his future bride. He never succeeded. Somehow Wenna always parted from him in a merry mood. These were pleasant evenings in Mrs. Rosewarne's parlour; there was a good deal of quiet fun going on; and, if Wenna did come along the passage to the door with him, she was generally talking and laughing all the way. Of course he was not going to kiss her in that mood—as if, to use his own expression, he had been a jocular ploughboy. "Good-night, dear," he managed to say to her on one occasion, and for ten minutes thereafter as he walked home through the darkness, he felt that his face was burning.

He had kissed her hand once. That was on his first meeting her after she had written the letter in which she promised to be his wife, and Mrs. Rosewarne had sent him into the room where she knew her daughter was alone. Wenna rose up to meet him, pale, frightened, with her eyes downcast. He took her hand and kissed it; and then, after a pause, he said, "I hope I shall make you happy." She could not answer. She began to tremble violently. He asked her to sit down, and begged of her not to be disturbed. She was recalled to herself by the accidental approach of her sister Mabyn, who came along the passage, singing, "Oh, the men of merry, merry England," in excellent imitation of the way in which Harry Trelyon used to sing that once famous song as he rode his black horse along the highways. Mabyn came into the room, stared, and would have gone out, but that her sister called to her and asked her to come and hold down a pattern while she cut some cloth. Mabyn wondered that her sister should be so diligent when a visitor was present. She saw, too, that Wenna's fingers trembled. Then she remained in the room until Mr. Roscorla went, sitting by a window and not overhearing their conversation, but very much inclined to break in upon it by asking him how he dared to come there and propose to marry her sister Wenna.

"Oh, Wenna," she said, one evening some time after, when the two sisters were sitting out on the rocks at the end of the harbour, watching the sun go down behind the sea, "I cannot bear him coming to take you away like that. I shouldn't mind if he were like a sweetheart to you; but he's a multiplication-table sort of sweetheart—everything so regular, and accurate, and proper. I hate a man who always thinks what he's going to say, and always has neat sentences; and he watches you, and is so self-satisfied, and his information is always so correct. Oh, Wenna, I wish you had a young and beautiful lover, like a Prince!"

"My dear child," said the elder sister, with a smile, "young and beautiful lovers are for young and beautiful girls, like you."

"Oh, Wenna, how can you talk like that!" said the younger sister; "why will you always believe that you are less pretty than other people, when every one knows that you have the most beautiful eyes in all the world. You have! There's not anybody in all the world has such beautiful and soft eyes as you—you ask anybody and they will tell you, if you don't believe me. But I have no doubt—I have no doubt whatever—that Mr. Roscorla will try to make you believe you are very ugly, so that you mayn't think you've thrown yourself away."

Miss Mabyn looked very indignant, and very much inclined to cry at the same time; but the gentle sister put her hand on hers, and said—

"You will make me quarrel with you some day, Mabyn, if you are so unjust to Mr. Roscorla. You are continually accusing him of things of which he never dreams. Now he never gets a chance that he does not try to praise me in every way, and if there were no looking-glasses in the world I have no doubt he would make me believe I was quite lovely; and you shouldn't say those things of him, Mabyn—it isn't fair. He always speaks kindly of you. He thinks you are very pretty, and that you will grow up to be very beautiful when you become a woman."

Mabyn was not to be pacified by this ingenuous piece of flattery.

"You are such a simpleton, Wenna," she said, "he can make you believe anything."

"He does not try to make me believe anything I don't know already," said the elder sister, with some asperity.

"He tries to make you believe he is in love with you," said Mabyn, bluntly.

Wenna Rosewarne coloured up, and was silent for a minute. How was she to explain to this sister of hers all those theories which Mr. Roscorla had described to her in his first two or three letters? She felt that she had not the same gift of expression that he had.

"You don't understand—you don't understand at all, Mabyn, what you talk of as love. I suppose you mean the sort of wild madness you read of in books—well, I don't want that kind of love at all. There is quite a different sort of love, that comes of respect and affection and an agreement of wishes, and that is far more valuable and likely to be lasting. I don't want a lover who would do wild things, and make one wonder at his heroism, for that is the lover you get in books; but if you want to live a happy life, and please those around you, and be of service to them, you must have a very different sort of sweetheart—a man who will think of something else than a merely selfish passion, who will help you to be kind to other people, and whose affection will last through years and years."

"You have learnt your lesson very well," said Miss Mabyn, with a toss of her head. "He has spent some time in teaching you. But as for all that, Wenna, it's nothing but fudge. What a girl wants is to be really loved by a man, and then she can do without all those fine sentiments. As for Mr. Roscorla——"

"I do not think we are likely to agree on this matter, dear," said Wenna, calmly, as she rose; "and so we had better say nothing about it."

"Oh, I am not going to quarrel with you, Wenna," said the younger sister, promptly. "You and I will always agree very well. It is Mr. Roscorla and I who are not likely to agree very well—not at all likely, I can assure you."

They were walking back to Eglosilyan, under the clear evening skies, when whom should they see coming out to meet them but Mr. Roscorla himself. It was a pleasant time and place for lovers to come together. The warm light left by the sunset still shone across the hills; the clear blue-green water in the tiny harbour lay perfectly still; Eglosilyan had got its day's work over, and was either chatting in the cottage gardens or strolling down to have a look at the couple of coasters moored behind the small but powerful breakwater. But Mr. Roscorla had had no hope of discovering Wenna alone; he was quite as well content to find Mabyn with her, though that young lady, as he came up, looked particularly fierce, and did not smile at all when she shook hands with him. Was it the red glow in the west that gave an extra tinge of colour to Mr. Roscorla's face? Wenna felt that she was better satisfied with her engagement when her lover was not present; but she put that down to a natural shyness and modesty which she considered was probably common to all girls in these strange circumstances.

Mr. Roscorla wished to convoy the two young ladies back to the inn, and evidently meant to spend the evening there. But Miss Wenna ill requited his gallantry by informing him that she had intended to make one or two calls in the evening, which would occupy some time: in particular, she had undertaken to do something for Mrs. Luke's eldest girl; and she had also promised to go in and read for half an hour to Nicholas Keam, the brother of the wife of the owner of the Napoleon Hotel, who was very ill indeed, and far too languid to read for himself.

"But you know, Mr. Roscorla," said Mabyn, with a bitter malice, "if you would go into the Napoleon and read to Mr. Keam, Wenna and I could go up to Mother Luke's, and so we should save all that time, and I am sure Wenna is very tired to-day. Then you would be so much better able to pick out the things in the papers that Mr. Keam wants; for Wenna never knows what is old and new, and Mr. Keam is anxious to learn what is going on in politics, and the Irish Church, and that kind of thing."

Could he refuse? Surely a man who has just got a girl to say she will marry him, ought not to think twice about sacrificing half an hour to helping her in her occupations, especially if she be tired. Wenna could not have made the request herself; but she was anxious that he should say yes, now it had been made, for it was in a manner a test of his devotion to her; and she was overjoyed and most grateful to him when he consented. What Mabyn thought of the matter was not visible on her face.

CHAPTER VIII.

Wenna's First Triumph.

The two girls, as they went up the main street of Eglosilyan (it was sweet with the scent of flowers on this beautiful evening), left Mr. Roscorla in front of the obscure little public-house he had undertaken to visit; and it is probable that in the whole of England at that moment there was not a more miserable man. He knew this Nicholas Keam, and his sister, and his brother-in-law, so far as their names went, and they knew him by sight; but he had never said more than good-morning to any one of them, and he had certainly never entered this pot-house, where a sort of debating society was nightly held by the *habitués*. But, all the same, he would do what he had undertaken to do, for Wenna Rosewarne's sake; and it was with some sensation of a despairing heroism that he went up the steps of slate and crossed the threshold.

He looked into the place from the passage. He found before him what was really a large kitchen, with a spacious fire-place, and heavy rafters across the roof; but all round the walls there was a sort of bench with a high wooden back to it, and on this seat sate a number of men—one or two labourers, the rest slate-workers—who, in the dusk, were idly smoking and looking at the beer on the narrow tables before them. Was this the sort of place that his future wife had been in the habit of visiting? There was a sort of gloomy picturesqueness about the chamber, to be sure; for, warm as the evening was, a fire burned flickeringly in the grate; there was enough light to show the tin and copper vessels shining over the high mantelpiece; and a couple of fair-haired children were playing about the middle of the floor, little heeding the row of dusky figures around the tables, whose heads were half hidden by tobacco-smoke.

A tall, thin, fresh-coloured woman came along the passage; and Mr. Roscorla was glad that he had not to go in among these labourers to make his business known. It was bad enough to have to speak to Mrs. Haigh, the landlady of the Napoleon.

"Good morning, Mrs. Haigh," said he, with an appearance of cheerfulness.

"Good evenin', zor," said she, staring at him with those cruelly shrewd and clear eyes that the Cornish peasantry have.

"I called in to see Mr. Keam," said he. "Is he much better?"

A thousand wild suggestions flashed upon his mind. She might not recognise him. She would take him for a Scripture reader, come to hasten the poor man's death; or for the agent of some funeral company. He could not smile, as he was asking about a sick man; he could not sigh, for he had come to administer cheerfulness; and all the while, as Mrs. Haigh seemed to be regarding him, he grew more and more vexed and vowed that never again would he place himself in such a position.

"If yü'd like vor to see 'n, zor," said she, rather slowly, as if waiting

for further explanation, "yü'll vind 'n in the rüm"—and with that she opened the door of a room on the other side of the passage. It was obviously the private parlour of the household—an odd little chamber with plenty of coloured lithographs on the walls, and china and photographs on the mantelpiece; the floor of large blocks of slate ornamented with various devices in chalk; in the corner a cupboard filled with old cut crystal, brass candlesticks, and other articles of luxury. The room had one occupant—a tall man who sate in a big wooden chair by the window, his head hanging forward between his high shoulders, and his thin white hands on the arms of the chair. The sunken cheeks, the sallow-white complexion, the listless air, and an occasional sigh of resignation told a sufficiently plain story; although Mrs. Haigh, in regarding her brother, and speaking to him in a loud voice, as if to arouse his attention, wore an air of brisk cheerfulness strangely in contrast with the worn look of his face.

"Don't yü knaw Mr. Roscorla, brother Nicholas?" said his sister, "Don't yü look mazed, when he's come vor to zee if yü're better. And yü be much better to-day, brother Nicholas?"

"Yes, I think," said the sick man, agreeing with his sister out of mere listlessness.

"Oh, yes, I think you look much better," said Mr. Roscorla, hastily and nervously, for he feared that both these people would see in his face what he thought of this unhappy man's chances of living. But Nicholas Keam mostly kept his eyes turned towards the floor, except when the brisk, loud voice of his sister roused him and caused him to look up.

A most awkward pause ensued. Mr. Roscorla felt convinced they would think he was mad if he offered to sit down in this parlour and read the newspapers to the invalid; he forgot that they did not know him as well as he did himself. On the other hand, would they not consider him a silly person if he admitted that he only made the offer in order to please a girl? Besides, he could see no newspapers in the room. Fortunately, at this moment, Mr. Keam himself came to the rescue by saying, in a slow and languid way—

"I did expect vor to zee Miss Rosewarne this evenin'—yaäs, I did; and she were to read me the news; but I suppose now——"

"Oh!" said Mr. Roscorla, quickly, "I have just seen Miss Rosewarne—she told me she expected to see you, but was a little tired. Now, if you like, I will read the newspapers to you as long as the light lasts."

"Why don't yü thank the gentleman, brother Nicholas?" said Mrs. Haigh, who was apparently most anxious to get away to her duties. "That be very kind of yü, zor. 'Tis a great comfort to 'n to hear the news; and I'll send yü in the papers to once. Yü come away with me, Rosana, and yü can come agwain and bring the gentleman the newspapers."

She dragged off with her a small girl who had wandered in; and Mr. Roscorla was left alone with the sick man. The feelings in his heart were

not those which Wenna would have expected to find there as the result of the exercise of charity.

The small girl came back, and gave him the newspapers. He began to read; she sate down before him and stared up into his face. Then a brother of hers came in, and he, too, sate down, and proceeded to stare. Mr. Roscorla inwardly began to draw pictures of the astonishment of certain of his old acquaintances if they had suddenly opened that small door, and found him, in the parlour of an ale-house, reading stale political articles to an apparently uninterested invalid and a couple of cottage children.

He was thankful that the light was rapidly declining; and long before he had reached his half-hour he made that his excuse for going.

"The next time I come, Mr. Keam," said he, cheerfully, as he rose and took his hat, "I shall come earlier."

"I did expect vor to zee Miss Rosewarne this evenin'," said Nicholas Keam, ungratefully paying no heed to the hypocritical offer; "vor she were here yesterday marnin', and she told me that Mr. Trelyon had zeen my brother in London streets, and I want vor to know mower about 'n, I dü."

"*She* told you?" Mr. Roscorla said, with a sudden and wild suspicion filling his mind. "How did she know that Mr. Trelyon was in London?"

"How did she knaw?" repeated the sick man, indolently. "Why, he zaid zo in the letter."

So Mr. Trelyon, whose whereabouts were not even known to his own family, was in correspondence with Miss Rosewarne, and she had carefully concealed the fact from the man she was going to marry. Mr. Roscorla rather absently took his leave. When he went outside a clear twilight was shining over Eglosilyan, and the first of the yellow stars were palely visible in the grey. He walked slowly down towards the inn.

If Mr. Roscorla had any conviction on any subject whatever, it was this—that no human being ever thoroughly and without reserve revealed himself or herself to any other human being. Of course, he did not bring that as a charge against the human race, or against that member of it from whose individual experience he had derived his theory—himself; he merely accepted this thing as one of the facts of life. People, he considered, might be fairly honest, well-intentioned, and moral; but inside the circle of their actions and sentiments that were openly declared there was another circle only known to themselves; and to this region the foul bird of suspicion, as soon as it was born, immediately fled on silent wings. Not that, after a minute's consideration, he suspected anything very terrible in the present case. He was more vexed than alarmed. And yet at times, as he slowly walked down the steep street, he grew a little angry, and wondered how this apparently ingenuous creature should have concealed from him her correspondence with Harry Trelyon, and resolved that he would have a speedy explanation of the whole matter. He was too shrewd a man of the world to be tricked by a girl, or trifled with by an impertinent lad.

He was overtaken by the two girls, and they walked together the rest of the way. Wenna was in excellent spirits, and was very kind and grateful to him. Somehow, when he heard her low and sweet laughter, and saw the frank kindness of her dark eyes, he abandoned the gloomy suspicions that had crossed his mind; but he still considered that he had been injured, and that the injury was all the greater in that he had just been persuaded into making a fool of himself for Wenna Rosewarne's sake.

He said nothing to her then, of course; and, as the evening passed cheerfully enough in Mrs. Rosewarne's parlour, he resolved he would postpone enquiry into this matter. He had never seen Wenna so pleased herself, and so determinately bent on pleasing others. She petted her mother, and said slyly sarcastic things of her father, until George Rosewarne roared with laughter; she listened with respectful eyes and attentive ears when Mr. Roscorla pronounced an opinion on the affairs of the day; and she dexterously cut rolls of paper and dressed up her sister Mabyn to represent a lady of the time of Elizabeth, to the admiration of everybody. Mr. Roscorla had inwardly to confess that he had secured for himself a most charming and delightful wife, who would make a wonderful difference in those dull evenings up at Bassett Cottage.

He only half guessed the origin of Miss Wenna's great and obvious satisfaction. It was really this—that she had that evening reaped the first welcome fruits of her new relations in finding Mr. Roscorla ready to go and perform acts of charity. But for her engagement, that would certainly not have happened; and this, she believed, was but the auspicious beginning. Of course Mr. Roscorla would have laughed if she had informed him of her belief that the regeneration of the whole little world of Eglosilyan—something like the Millennium, indeed—was to come about merely because an innkeeper's daughter was about to be made a married woman. Wenna Rosewarne, however, did not formulate any such belief; but she was none the less proud of the great results that had already been secured by —— by what? By her sacrifice of herself? She did not pursue the subject so far.

Her delight was infectious. Mr. Roscorla, as he walked home that night—under the throbbing starlight, with the sound of the Atlantic murmuring through the darkness—was, on the whole, rather pleased that he had been vexed on hearing of that letter from Harry Trelyon. He would continue to be vexed. He would endeavour to be jealou- without measure; for how can jealousy exist if an anxious love is not pre- sent? and, in fact, should not a man who is really fond of a n be quick to resent the approach of anyone who seems to interfere his right of property in her affections? By the time he reacl ssett Cottage, Mr. Roscorla had very nearly persuaded himself int elief that he was really in love with Wenna Rosewarne.

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1 Gravy Spoon	0 6 0	0 8 0	0 9 0
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CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER 1874.

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He stood and looked at the sea while Wenna chatted with her acquaintance.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1874.

Three Feathers.

CHAPTER IX.

The Ring of Evil Omen.

ONE of Wenna's many friends outside the village in which she lived was a strange misshapen creature who earned his living by carrying sand from one of the bays on the coast to the farmers on the uplands above. This he did by means of a troop of donkeys—small, rough, light-haired, and large-eyed animals—that struggled up the rude and steep path on the face of the cliff, with the bags on their backs that he had laboriously filled below. It was a sufficiently cheerless occupation for this unfortunate hunchback, and not a very profitable one. The money he got from the farmers did not much more than cover the keep of the donkeys. He seldom spoke to any human being; for who was going to descend that rough and narrow path down to the shore—where he and his donkeys appeared to be no bigger than mice—with the knowledge that there was no path round the precipitous coast, and that nothing would remain but the long climb up again?

Wenna Rosewarne had some pity for this solitary wretch, who toiled at his task with the melancholy Atlantic

before him, and behind him a great and lonely wall of crumbling slate; and, whenever she had time, she used to walk with her sister across from Eglosilyan by the high-lying downs until they reached this little indentation in the coast where a curve of yellow sand was visible far below. If this poor fellow and his donkeys were to be seen from the summit, the two girls had little fear of the fatigue of descending the path down the side of the steep cliff; and the object of their visit used to be highly pleased and flattered by their coming to chat with him for a few minutes. He would hasten the filling of his bags so as to ascend again with them, and, in a strange tongue that even the two Cornish-born girls could not always understand, he would talk to them of the merits of his favourite donkeys, of their willingness, and strength, and docility. They never took him any tracts; they never uttered a word of condolence or sympathy. Their visit was merely of the nature of a friendly call; but it was a mark of attention and kindliness that gave the man something pleasant to think of for days thereafter.

Now, on one of these occasions, Mr. Roscorla went with Wenna and her sister; and although he did not at all see the use of going down this precipitous cliff for the mere purpose of toiling up again, he was not going to confess that he dreaded the fatigue of it. Moreover, this was another mission of charity; and, although he had not called again on Mr. Keam—although, in fact, he had inwardly vowed that the prayers of a thousand angels would not induce him again to visit Mr. Keam—he was anxious that Wenna should believe that he still remained her pupil. So, with a good grace, he went down the tortuous pathway to the desolate little bay where the sand-carrier was at work. He stood and looked at the sea while Wenna chatted with her acquaintance; he studied the rigging of the distant ships; he watched the choughs and daws flying about the face of the rocks; he drew figures on the sand with the point of his cane, and wondered whether he would be back in good time for luncheon if this garrulous hunchback jabbered in his guttural way for another hour. Then he had the pleasure of climbing up the cliff again, with a whole troop of donkeys going before him in Indian file up the narrow and zig-zag path, and at last he reached the summit. His second effort in the way of charity had been accomplished.

He proposed that the young ladies should sit down to rest for a few minutes, after the donkeys and their driver had departed; and accordingly the three strangers chose a block of slate for a seat, with the warm grass for a footstool, and all around them the beauty of an August morning. The sea was ruffled into a dark blue where it neared the horizon; but closer at hand it was pale and still. The sun was hot on the bleak pasture-land. There was a scent of fern and wild thyme in the air.

"By the way, Wenna," said Mr. Roscorla, "I wonder you have never asked me why I have not yet got you an engaged ring."

"Wenna does not want an engaged ring," said Miss Mabyn, sharply. "They are not worn now."

This audacious perversion of fact on the part of the self-willed young beauty was in reality a sort of cry of despair. If Mr. Roscorla had not yet spoken of a ring to Wenna, Mabyn had; and Mabyn had besought of her sister not to accept this symbol of hopeless captivity.

"Oh, Wenna," she had said, "if you take a ring from him, I shall look on you as carried away from us for ever."

"Nonsense, Mabyn," the elder sister had said. "The ring is of no importance; it is the word you have spoken that is."

"Oh no, it isn't," Mabyn said earnestly. "As long as you don't wear a ring, Wenna, I still fancy I shall get you back from him; and you may say what you like, but you are far too good for him."

"Mabyn, you are a disobedient child," the elder sister said, stopping the argument with a kiss, and not caring to raise a quarrel.

Well, when Mr. Roscorla was suddenly confronted by this statement, he was startled; but he inwardly resolved that, as soon as he and Wenna were married, he would soon bring Miss Mabyn's interference in their affairs to an end. At present he merely said, mildly—

"I was not aware that engaged rings were no longer worn. However, if that be so, it is no reason why we should discontinue a good old custom; and I have put off getting you one, Wenna, because I knew I had to go to London soon. I find now I must go on Monday next; and so I want you to tell me what sort of stones you like best in a ring."

"I am sure I don't know," Wenna said, humbly and dutifully. "I am sure to like whatever you choose."

"But what do you prefer yourself?" he again said.

Wenna hesitated, but Miss Mabyn did not. She was prepared for the crisis. She had foreseen it.

"Oh, Mr. Roscorla," she said (and you would not have fancied there was any guile or malice in that young and pretty face, with its tender blue eyes and its proud and sweet mouth), "don't you know that Wenna likes emeralds?"

Mr. Roscorla was very near telling the younger sister to mind her own business; but he was afraid. He only said, in a stiff way, to his betrothed—

"Do you like emeralds?"

"I think they are very pretty," Wenna replied, meekly. "I am sure I shall like any ring you choose."

"Oh, very well," said he, rather discontented that she would show no preference. "I shall get you an emerald ring."

When she heard this decision, the heart of Mabyn Rosewarne was filled with an unholy joy. This was the rhyme that was running through her head:—

Oh, green's forsaken,
And yellow's forsworn,
And blue's the sweetest
Colour that's worn!

Wenna was saved to her now. How could any two people marry who had engaged themselves with an emerald ring? There was a great deal of what might be called natural religion in this young lady, to distinguish it from that which she had been taught on Sunday forenoons and at her mother's knee: a belief in occult influences ruling the earth, unnameable, undefinable, but ever present and ever active. If fairly challenged, she might have scrupled to say that she believed in Browneys, or the Small People, or in any one of the thousand superstitions of the Cornish peasantry. But she faithfully observed these superstitions. If her less heedful sister put a cut loaf upside down on the plate, Mabyn would instantly right it, and say "Oh, Wenna!" as if her sister had forgotten that that simple act meant that some ship was in sore distress. If Wenna laughed at any of these fancies, Mabyn said nothing; but all the same she was convinced in her own mind that things happened to people in a strange fashion, and in accordance with omens that might have been remarked. She knew that if Mr. Roscorla gave Wenna a ring of emeralds, Mr. Roscorla would never marry her.

One thing puzzled her, however. Which of the two was to be the forsaken? Was it Wenna or Mr. Roscorla who would break this engagement that the younger sister had set her heart against? Well, she would not have been sorry if Mr. Roscorla were the guilty party, except in so far as some humiliation might thereby fall on Wenna. But the more she thought of the matter, the more she was convinced that Mr. Roscorla was aware he had the best of the bargain, and was not at all likely to seek to escape from it. It was he who must be forsaken; and she had no pity for him. What right had an old man to come and try to carry off her sister—her sister whose lover ought to be "young and beautiful like a prince"? Mabyn kept repeating the lines to herself all the time they walked homewards; and if Wenna had asked her a question just then, the chances are she would have answered—

> Oh, green's forsaken,
> And yellow's forsworn,
> And blue's the sweetest
> Colour that's worn!

But Wenna was otherwise engaged during this homeward walk. Mr. Roscorla, having resolved to go to London, thought he might as well have that little matter about Harry Trelyon cleared up before he went. He had got all the good out of it possible, by nursing whatever unquiet suspicions it provoked, and trying to persuade himself that as he was in some measure jealous he must in some measure be in love. But he had not the courage to take these suspicions with him to London; they were not pleasant travelling companions.

"I wonder," he said, in rather a nervous way, "whether I shall see young Trelyon in London."

Wenna was not at all disturbed by the mention of the name. She only said, with a smile—

"It is a big place to seek any one in."

"You know he is there?"

"Oh yes," she answered directly.

"It is odd that you should know, for he has not told any one up at Trelyon Hall; in fact, no one appears to have heard anything about him but yourself."

"How very silly of him," Wenna said, "to be so thoughtless! Doesn't his mother know? Do you think she would like to know?"

"Well," said he, with marked coldness, "doubtless she would be surprised at his having communicated with you in preference to any one else."

Wenna's soft dark eyes were turned up to his face with a sudden look of astonishment. He had never spoken to her in this way before. She could not understand. And then she said, very quickly, and with a sudden flush of colour to the pale face—

"Oh! but this letter is only about the dog. I will show it to you. I have it in my pocket."

She took out the letter and handed it to him; and he might have seen that her hand trembled. She was very much perturbed—she scarcely knew why. But there was something in his manner that had almost frightened her—something distant, and harsh, and suspicious; and surely she had done no wrong?

He smoothed out the crumpled sheet of paper, and a contemptuous smile passed over his face.

"He writes with more care to you than to other people; but I can't say much for his handwriting at the best."

Wenna coloured, and said nothing; but Mabyn remarked, rather warmly—

"I don't think a man need try to write like a dancing-master, if he means what he says, and can tell you that frankly."

Mr. Roscorla did not heed this remarkably incoherent speech, for he was reading the letter, which ran as follows:—

"Nolans's Hotel, London, July 30, 18—.

"Dear Miss Rosewarne,—I know you would like to have Rock, and he's no good at all as a retreaver, and I've written to Luke to take him down to you at the Inn, and I shall be very pleased if you will accept him as a present from me. Either Luke or your father will tell you how to feed him; and I am sure you will be kind to him, and not chain him up, and give him plenty of exersise. I hope you are all well at the Inn, and that Mabyn's pigeons have not flowne away Tell her not to forget the piece of looking-glass.

"Yours faithfully,

"HARRY TRELYON.

"P.S.—I met Joshua Keam quite by accident yesterday. He asked for you most kindly. His leg has been ampitated at last."

Here was nothing at which a jealous lover might grumble. Mr. Roscorla handed back the letter with scarcely a word, leaving Wenna to puzzle over what had happened to make him look at her in that strange way. As for Miss Mabyn, that young lady would say nothing to hurt her sister's feelings; but she said many a bitter thing to herself about the character of a gentleman who would read another gentleman's letter, particularly when the former was an elderly gentleman and the latter a young one, and most of all when the young gentleman had been writing to a girl, and that girl her sister Wenna. "But green's forsaken," Mabyn said to herself, as if there was great comfort in that reflection—"green's forsaken, and yellow's forsworn."

And so Mr. Roscorla was going away from Eglosilyan for a time, and Wenna would be left alone. As almost every day now brought her a new and strange experience, she was not surprised that this change of circumstances should set her thinking afresh. She would have to write to him; and the letters of people engaged to each other ought to be affectionate. Hitherto Wenna's letters to her lover had been of a remarkably simple and business-like character, chiefly answering questions of his as to the hour at which he might come down to the Inn. She did not quite like the idea of having to write long letters to him at a distance.

Would their parting be very painful? Ought she to feel grieved when he went away? She hoped that other people would be present, and that Mr. Roscorla would treat his going away as a mere matter of course.

Certainly, if this brief separation promised to afflict her grievously, it had not that effect in the meantime; for once she had gone over the matter in her mind, and sketched out, as was her wont, all that she ought to do, she quickly recovered her cheerfulness, and was in very good spirits indeed when the small party reached Eglosilyan. And here was a small and sunburnt boy—Master Pentecost Luke, in fact—waiting for her right in the middle of the road in front of the Inn, whom she caught up, and kissed, and scolded all at once.

"Whatever are you doing down here, sir, all by yourself?"

"I have tum to see you," the small boy said, in no way frightened or abashed by her rough usage of him.

"And so you want Mr. Trelyon to ride over you again, do you? Haven't I told you never to come here without some of your brothers and sisters? Well, say 'How do you do?' to the gentleman. Don't you know Penny Luke, Mr. Roscorla?"

"I believe I have that honour," said Mr. Roscorla, with a smile, but not at all pleased to be kept in the middle of the road chattering to a cottager's child.

Miss Wenna presently showed that she was a well-built and active young woman, by swinging Master Penny up, and perching him on her shoulder, in which fashion she carried him into the Inn.

"Penny is a great friend of mine," she said to Mr. Roscorla, who would not himself have attempted that feat of skill and dexterity, "and

you must make his acquaintance. He is a very good boy on the whole, but sometimes he goes near to breaking my heart. I shall have to give him up and take another sweetheart, if he doesn't mind. He *will* eat things with his fingers, and he will run out and get among horses' feet; and as for the way he conducts himself when his face is being washed, and he is being made like a gentleman, I never saw the like of it. And then the impudence of him—why, the other night, when he was repeating his prayers, what must he do but stop half-way, and say, '*God knows the rest, and Penny's very tired!*'

Mr. Roscorla laughed, and Mabyn hated him for laughing. But what could she expect? Here was her own sister telling the story in a jocular way; and she remembered bitterly that when Wenna first told it to her, two great tears sprang to her eyes, and the end of the narrative was rather confused. Now it was only a joke. There could be no doubt, the younger sister said to herself, with a great anger at her heart, that Wenna's sweet and tender nature was being perverted and destroyed by the influence of this horrid old wretch of a lover of hers, and the sooner he went in quest of that deadly emerald ring the better.

Mabyn said her prayers that night in the ordinary and formal fashion. She prayed for her father and mother and for her sister Wenna, as she had been taught; and she added in the Princess of Wales on her own account, because she liked her pretty face. She also prayed that she herself should be made humble and good, desirous of serving her fellow-creatures, and charitable to every one. All this was done in due order.

But in point of fact her heart was at that moment far from being meek and charitable; it was, on the contrary, filled with bitterness and indignation. And the real cry of her soul, unknown to herself, went out to all the vague, imaginative powers of magic and witchcraft—to the mysterious influences of the stars and the strange controllers of chance: and it was to these that she looked for the rescue of her sister from the doom that threatened her, and to them that she appealed with a yearning far too great for words or even for tears. When she was but a child playing among the rocks, she had stumbled on the dead body of a sailor that had been washed ashore; and she had run, white and trembling, into the village with the news. Afterwards she was told that on the hand of the corpse a ring with a green stone in it was found; and then she heard for the first time the rhyme that had never since left her memory. She certainly did not wish that Mr. Roscorla should die; but she as certainly wished that her sister Wenna should be saved from becoming his wife; and she reflected with a fierce satisfaction that it was she who had driven him to promise that Wenna's engaged ring should be composed of those fatal stones.

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CHAPTER X.

The Snares of London.

If Mr. Harry Trelyon was bent on going to the devil, to use his own phrase, he went a quiet way about it. On the warm and close evening of a summer's day he arrived in London. A red smoke hung about the western sky, over the tops of the houses; the thoroughfares that were in shadow were filled with a pale blue mist; the air was still and stifling—very different from that which came in at night from the sea to the gardens and cottages of Eglosilyan. He drove down through these hot and crowded streets to an hotel near Charing Cross—an old-fashioned little place much frequented by west-country people, who sometimes took rooms there and brought their daughters up for a month or so of the season, at which time no other guests could obtain admission. At ordinary times, however, the place was chiefly tenanted by a few country gentlemen and a clergyman or two, who had small sitting-rooms, in which they dined with their families, and in which they drank a glass of something hot before going to bed at night after coming home from the theatre.

Harry Trelyon was familiar with the place, and its ways, and the traditions of his father and grandfather having invariably come to it; and, following in their footsteps, he, too, obtained a private sitting-room as well as a bedroom, and then he ordered dinner. It was not much in the way of a banquet for a young gentleman who was determined to go to the devil. It consisted of a beefsteak and a pint of claret; and it was served in a fairly-sized, old-fashioned, dimly-lit room, the furniture of which was of that very substantial sort that is warranted to look dingy for a couple of generations. He was attended by a very old and shrunken waiter, whose white whiskers were more respectable than his shabby clothes. On his first entrance into the room he had looked at the young man who, in a rough shooting suit, was stretched out at full length in an easy chair; and, in answering a question, he had addressed him by his name.

"How do you know my name?" the lad said.

"Ah, sir, there's no mistaking one o' your family. I can remember your grandfather, and your uncle, and your father—did you never hear, sir, that I was a witness for your father at the police-court?"

"What row was that?" the young gentleman asked, showing his familiarity with the fact that the annals of the Trelyons were of a rather stormy character.

"Why, sir," the old man said, warming up into a little excitement, and unconsciously falling into something like the provincial accent of his youth, "I believe you was in the hotel at the time—yes, as well as I can recollect, you was a little chap then, and had gone to bed. Well, maybe I'm wrong—'tis a good few years agone. But, anyhow, your father and that good lady your mother, they were a-coming home from a theatre; and there was two or three young fellers on the pavement—I was the porter

then, sir—and I think that one of 'em called out to the other, 'Well, here's a country beauty,' or some such cheek. But, anyhow, your father, sir, he knocks him aside, and takes his good lady into the door of the hotel, and then they was for follerin' of him, but as soon as she was inside, then he turns, and there was a word or two, and one of 'em he ups with a stick, and says I to myself, 'I can't stand aby and see three or four set on one gentleman;' but lor! sir—well, you wouldn't believe it—but before I could make a step, there was two of 'em lyin' on the pavement—clean, straight down, sir, with their hats running into the street—and the other two making off as fast as they could bolt across the square. Oh, lor, sir, wa'n't it beautiful! And the way as your father turned and says he to me, with a laugh like, 'Tomlins,' says he, 'you can give them gentlemen a glass of brandy and water when they ask for it'! And the magistrate, sir, he was a real sensible gentleman, and he give it hot to these fellers, for they began the row, sir, and no mistake; but to see the way they went down—lor, sir, you can't believe it!"

"Oh, can't I, though?" Master Harry said, with a roar of laughter. "Don't you make any mistake. I say, what did you say your name was?"

"My name, sir," said the old man, suddenly sinking from the epic heights, which had lent a sort of inspiration to his face, down to the ordinary chastened and respectful bearing of a waiter, "my name, sir, in the hotel is Charles; but your good father, sir, he knowed my name, which is Tomlins, sir."

"Well, look here, Tomlins," the boy said, "you go and ask the landlady to give you a holiday this evening, and come in and smoke a pipe with me."

"Oh, lor, sir," the old waiter said, aghast at the very notion, "I couldn't do that. It would be as much as my place is worth."

"Oh, never mind your place—I'll get you a better one," the lad said, with a sort of royal carelessness. "I'll get you a place down in Cornwall. You come and help our butler—he's a horrid old fool. When I come of age, I mean to build a house there for myself. No, I think I shall have rooms in London—anyhow, I'll give you 100*l.* a year."

The old man shook his head.

"No, sir, thank you very much, sir. I'm too old to begin again. You want a younger man than me. Beg your pardon, sir, but they're ringing for me."

"Poor old beggar!" said Trelyon to himself, when the waiter had left the room; "I wonder if he's married, and if he's got any kids that one could help. And so he was a witness for my father. Well, he shan't suffer for that."

Master Harry finished his steak and his pint of claret; then he lit a cigar, got into a hansom, and drove up to a street in Seven Dials, where he at length discovered a certain shop. The shutters were on the windows, and a stout old lady was taking in from the door the last of the rabbit-hutches and cages that had been out there during the evening.

"You're Mrs. Finch, aint you?" Trelyon said, making his way into the shop, which was lit inside by a solitary jet of gas.

"Yes, sir," said the woman, looking up at the tall young man in the rough shooting-costume and brown wideawake.

"Well, my name's Trelyon, and I'm come to blow you up. A pretty mess you made of that flamingo for me—why, a bishop in lawn sleeves couldn't have stuffed it worse. Where did you ever see a bird with a neck like a corkscrew?—and when I opened it to put it straight, then I found out all your tricks, Mrs. Finch."

"But you know, sir," said Mrs. Finch, smiling blandly, "it aint our line of business."

"Well, I'd advise you to get somebody else next time to stuff for you. However, I bear you no malice. You show me what you've got in the way of live stock; and if you take fifty per cent. off your usual prices, I'll let the corkscrew flamingo go."

A minute thereafter he was being conducted down some very dark steps into a subterranean cellar by this stout old woman, who carried a candle in front of him. Their entrance into this large, dismal, and strangely filled place—at the further end of which was a grating looking up to the street—awoke a profound commotion among the animals around. Cocks began to crow, suddenly awakened birds fluttered up and down their cages, parroquets and cockatoos opened their sleepy eyes and mechanically repeated "Pretty Poll!" and "Good night! good night!" Even the rabbits stared solemnly from behind the bars.

"What have you got there?" said Trelyon to his guide, pointing to a railway milk-can which stood in the corner, nearly filled with earth.

"A mole, sir," said Mrs. Finch; "it is a plaything of one of my boys; but I could let you have it, sir, if you have any curiosity that way."

"Why, bless you, I've had 'em by the dozen. I don't know how many I've let escape into our kitchen-garden, all with a string tied to their leg. Don't they go down a cracker if you let 'em loose for a second! I should say that fellow in there was rather disgusted when he came to the tin, don't you think? Got any cardinals, Mrs. Finch? I lost every one o' them you sent me."

"Dear, dear me!" said Mrs. Finch, showing very great concern.

"Ay, you may well say that. Every one o' them, and about forty more birds besides before I found out what it was—an infernal weasel that had made its way into the rockwork of my aviary, and there he lived at his ease for nearly a fortnight, just killing whatever he chose, and the beggar seemed to have a fancy for the prettiest birds. I had to pull the whole place to pieces before I found him out—and there he was, grinning and snarling in a corner. By Jove! didn't I hit him a whack with a stick I had! There were no more birds for him in this world."

At this moment Mrs. Finch's husband and two of her small boys came downstairs; and very soon the conversation on natural history became general, each one anxious to give his experiences of the wonderful things

he had observed, even if his travels had carried him no further than Battersea Reaches. Master Harry forgot that he had left a hansom at the door. There was scarcely an animal in this dungeon that he did not examine; and when he suddenly discovered that it was considerably past eleven o'clock, he found himself the owner of about as much property as would have filled two cabs. He went upstairs, dismissed the hansom, and got a four-wheeler, in which he deposited the various cages, fish-globes, and what not that he had bought; and then he drove off to his hotel, getting all the waiters in the place to assist in carrying these various objects tenderly upstairs. Thus ended his first evening in London, the chief result of which was that his sitting-room had assumed the appearance of a bird-catcher's window.

Next forenoon he walked up into Hyde Park to have a look at the horses. Among the riders he recognised several people whom he knew—some of them, indeed, related to him—but he was careful to take no notice of them.

"Those women," he said to himself, in a sensible manner, "don't want to recognise a fellow who has a wideawake on. They would do it, though, if you presented yourself; and they would ask you to lunch or to tea in the afternoon. Then you'd find yourself among a lot of girls, all with their young men about them, and the young men would wonder how the dickens you came to be in a shooting-coat in London."

So he pursued his way, and at length found himself in the Zoological Gardens. He sat for nearly an hour staring at the lions and tigers, imagining all sorts of incidents as he looked at their sleepy and cruel eyes, and wondering what one splendid fellow would do if he went down and stroked his nose. He had the satisfaction also of seeing the animals fed, and he went round with the man, and had an interesting conversation with him.

Then he went and had some luncheon himself, and got into talk with the amiable young lady who waited on him, who expressed in generous terms, with a few superfluous *h*'s, the pleasure which she derived from going to the theatre.

"Oh, do you like it?" he said, carelessly; "I never go. I always fall asleep—country habits, you know. But you get somebody to go with you, and I'll send you a couple of places for to-morrow night, if you like."

"I think I could get some one to take me," said the young lady, with a pretty little simper.

"Yes, I should think you could," he said, bluntly. "What's your name?"

He wrote it down on one of his own cards, and went his way.

The next place of entertainment he visited was an American bowling-alley in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, a highly respectable place to which gentlemen resorted for the purpose of playing a refined sort of skittles. Master Harry merely wanted to practise, and also to stretch his arms and legs. He had just begun, however, to send the big balls crash-

ing into the pins at the further end of the long alley, when the only visitor in the place—a sailor-looking person, with a red face, who was smoking a very elaborate meerschaum—offered to play a game with him.

"All right," said Trelyon.

"For a couple of bob?" says the stranger.

"Do you mean two shillings?" asks the young man, calmly looking down upon the person with the red face; for, of course, Harry Trelyon never used slang.

"Yes," said the other, with much indifference, as he selected one of the balls.

They played a game, and Trelyon won easily. They played another, and again he won. They played a third, and still he won.

"Oh, let's play for a sovereign," said the stranger.

"No," said the young man; "I'm going."

Well, this did not at all seem to suit his opponent, who became rather demonstrative in manner. He did not like gentlemen coming in to win money, without giving a fellow a chance of winning it back. At this, Trelyon turned suddenly—he had not yet put on his coat—and said:

"What do you mean? I won't play any more, but I'll knock the head off you in two minutes, if that'll suit you better."

The gentleman with the red face paused for a minute. He was evidently in a nasty temper. He looked at the build of the young man; he also observed that one of the assistants was drawing near; and still he said nothing. Whereupon Master Harry quietly put on his coat, lit a cigar, gave a friendly nod to his late opponent, and walked out.

In this wise he lounged about London for a day or two, looking in at Tattersall's, examining new breechloaders in shops in St. James's Street, purchasing ingenuities in fishing-tackle, and very frequently feeding the ducks in the Serpentine with bread bought of the boys standing round. It was not a very lively sort of existence, he found. Colonel Ransome had left for Scotland on the very day before his arrival in London, so that peaceable and orderly means of getting that dowry for Wenna Rosewarne were not at hand; and Master Harry, though he was enough of a devil-may-care, had no intention of going to the Jews for the money until he was driven to that. Colonel Ransome, moreover, had left his constituents unrepresented in the House during the last few days of the session, and had quietly gone off to Scotland for the 12th, so that it was impossible to say when he might return. Meanwhile young Trelyon made the acquaintance of whatever birds, beasts, and fishes he could find in London, until he got a little tired.

All of a sudden it struck him one evening, as a happy relief, that he would sit down and write to Wenna Rosewarne. He ordered in pens, ink, and paper with much solemnity; and then he said to the old waiter—

"Tomlins, how do you spell 'retriever'?"

"I aint quite sure, sir," Tomlins said.

Whereupon Master Harry had to begin and compose that letter which

we have already read, but which cost him an amount of labour not visible in the lines as they stand. He threw away a dozen sheets of paper before he even mastered a beginning; and it was certainly an hour and a half before he had produced a copy which more or less satisfied him. Mr. Roscorla noticed at once the pains he had taken with the writing.

Then in due course came the answer; and Master Harry paused with much satisfaction to look at the pretty handwriting on the envelope—he did not often get letters from young ladies. The contents, however, did not please him quite so much. They were these:—

"Eglosilyan, August 3, 18—,

"Dear Mr. Trelyon,—Thank you very much for giving me your beautiful dog. I shall take great care of him, and if you want him for the shooting you can have him at any time. But I am surprised you should write to me when I hear that you have not written to your own relatives, and that they do not even know where you are. I cannot understand how you should be so careless of the feelings of others. I am sure it is thoughtlessness rather than selfishness on your part; but I hope you will write to them at once. Mr. Barnes has just called, and I have given him your address. "I am, yours sincerely,

'WENNA ROSEWARNE."

Harry Trelyon was at once vexed and pleased by this letter; probably more vexed than pleased, for he threw it impatiently on the table, and said to himself, "She's always reading lectures to people, and always making a fuss of nothing. She was meant for a Puritan—she should have gone out in the *Mayfly* to America."

Mayfly for Mayflower was perhaps a natural mistake for a trout-fisher to make; but Master Harry was unaware of it. He passed on to more gloomy fancies. What was this parson about that he should come enquiring for his address of Wenna Rosewarne? How had he found out that she knew it?

"Come," said he to himself, "this won't do. I must go down to Cornwall. And if there are any spies pushing their noses into my affairs, let 'em look out for a tweak, that's all!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE TWO PICTURES.

"OH, Mabyn," Wenna called out in despair, "you will have all my hair down. Have you gone quite mad?"

"Yes, quite," the younger sister said, with a wild enjoyment in her eyes. "Oh, Wenna, he's gone, he's gone, and he's gone to get you an emerald ring! Don't you know, you poor silly thing, that green's forsaken, and yellow's forsworn?"

"Well, Mabyn," the elder sister said, laughing in spite of herself

"you are the wickedest girl I ever heard of, and I wonder I am not angry with you."

At this moment they were returning to Eglosilyan along the Launceston highway; and far away behind them, on the road that crosses the bleak and lofty moors, the dog-cart was faintly visible which was taking Mr. Roscorla on his first stage towards London. He had driven the two sisters out for about a mile, and now they were going back; and Mabyn was almost beside herself with delight that he was gone, and that her sister had shown no great grief at his going. Their parting, indeed, had been of a most unromantic kind, much to the relief of both. Mr. Roscorla was rather late; and Wenna devoted her last words to impressing on him that he must have something to eat in Launceston before going down to the Plymouth train. Then she bade him make haste, and said good-bye with a kindly smile on her face, and away he went.

"Mabyn," she said in a mysterious voice, which stopped her sister's pulling her about, "do you think—now do you really think—Mr. Pavy would lend us his boat?"

"Oh, Wenna," the other one cried, "do let us have the boat out! Do you know that the whole air seems clear and light since Mr. Roscorla has gone? I should like to thank everybody in the world for being so kind as to take him away. Wenna, I'll run you to Basset Cottage for half-a-crown!"

"You!" said the elder sister, with great contempt. "I'll run you to the mill for a hundred thousand pounds."

"No, Wenna—Basset Cottage, if you like," said Mabyn, sturdily; and with that both the girls set out, with their heads down, in a business-like fashion that showed there was very little the matter with their lungs.

"Oh, Mabyn!" said Wenna, suddenly; and then both of them found that they had very nearly run into the arms of a clergyman—an elderly, white-haired, amiable-looking gentleman, who was rather slowly toiling up the hill. Mabyn looked frightened, and then laughed; but Wenna, with her cheeks very red, went forward and shook hands with him.

"Well, girls," he said, "you needn't stop running for me—a capital exercise, a capital exercise, that young ladies in towns don't have much of. And as for you, Wenna, you've plenty of work of a sedentary nature, you know—nothing better than a good race, nothing better."

"And how is your little granddaughter this morning, Mr. Trewhella?" said Wenna, gently, with her cheeks still flushed with the running.

"Ah! well, poor child, she is much about the same; but the pincushion is nearly finished now, and your name is on it in silver beads, and you are to come and have tea with her as soon as you can, that she may give it to you. Dear, dear! she was asking her mother yesterday whether the beads would carry all her love to you, for she did not think it possible herself. Well, good-bye, girls; don't you be ashamed of having a race together," with which the kindly-faced clergyman resumed his task of ascending the hill, and the two girls, abandoning their racing, walked

quickly down to the harbour, to see if they could persuade the silent and surly Mr. Pavy to let them have his boat.

Meanwhile Mr. Roscorla drove along the silent highway in George Rosewarne's dog-cart, and in due time he reached Launceston, and took the train for Plymouth. He stayed in Plymouth that night, having some business to do there; and next morning he found himself in the "Flying Dutchman" tearing along the iron rails towards London.

Now it was a fixed habit of Mr. Roscorla to try to get as near as possible to a clear and definite understanding of his relations with the people and things around him. He did not wish to have anything left vague and nebulous, even as regarded a mere sentiment; and as this was the first time he had got clear away from Eglosilyan and the life there since the beginning of his engagement, he calmly set about defining the position in which he stood with regard to Wenna Rosewarne.

There were a few unsatisfactory matters to dispose of. In the first place, he was conscious of a little hypocrisy in his bearing towards her; and he would not have minded the hypocrisy—for he did not believe that anybody was quite honest—but that the necessity for it made him impatient. Besides, might she not reproach him afterwards when she found it out, and consider herself aggrieved, and grow sulky?

But the chief matter for discontent that he had was the probable wonder of the world over the fact that he meant to marry an innkeeper's daughter. All the world could not know the sufficient reasons he had advanced to himself for that step; nor could they know of the very gradual way in which he had approached it. Every one would consider it as an abrupt and ludicrous act of folly; his very kindest friends would call it an odd freak of romance. Now Mr. Roscorla felt that at his time of life to be accused of romance was to be accused of silliness; and he resolved that, whenever he had a chance, he would let people know that his choice of Wenna Rosewarne was dictated by the most simple and commonplace arguments of prudence, such as would govern the conduct of any sane man.

He resolved, too, that he would clearly impress on Harry Trelyon—whom he expected to see at Nolans's—that this project of marriage with Miss Rosewarne was precisely what a man of the world placed in his position would entertain. He did not wholly like Master Harry. There was an ostentatious air of youth about the young man. There was a bluntness in his speech, too, that transgressed the limits of courtesy. Nor did he quite admire the off-handed fashion in which Harry Trelyon talked to the Rosewarnes, and more especially to the girls; he wished Miss Wenna Rosewarne, at least, to be treated with a little more formality and respect. At the same time, he would endeavour to remain good friends with this ill-mannered boy, for reasons to be made apparent.

When he arrived at Nolans's Hotel, he took a bedroom there, and then sent in a card to Harry Trelyon. He found that young gentleman up on a chair, trying to catch a Virginian nightingale that had escaped from one

of the cages; and he nearly stumbled over a tame hedgehog that ran pattering over the carpet, because his attention was drawn to a couple of very long-eared rabbits sitting in an easy-chair. Master Harry paid no attention to him until the bird was caught; then he came down, shook hands with him carelessly, and said—

"How odd you should stumble in here! Or did Wenna Rosewarne tell you I was at Nolans's?"

"Yes, Miss Rosewarne did," said Mr. Roscorla. "You have quite a menagerie here. Do you dine here or downstairs?"

"Oh! here, of course."

"I thought you might come and dine with me this evening at my club. Five minutes' walk from here, you know. Will you?"

"Yes, I will, if you don't mind this elegant costume."

Mr. Roscorla was precisely the person to mind the dress of a man whom he was taking into his club; but he was very well aware that, whatever dress young Trelyon wore, no one could mistake him for anything else than a gentleman. He was not at all averse to be seen with Master Harry in this rough costume; he merely suggested, with a smile, that a few feathers and bits of thread might be removed; and then, in the quiet summer evening, they went outside and walked westward.

"Now this is the time," Mr. Roscorla said, "when Pall Mall looks interesting to me. There is a sort of quiet and strong excitement about it. All that smoke there over the club chimneys tells of the cooking going forward; and you will find old boys having a sly look in at the dining-room to see that their tables are all right; and then friends come in, and smooth out their white ties, and have a drop of sherry and Angostura bitters while they wait. All this district is full of a silent satisfaction and hope just now. But I can't get you a good dinner, Trelyon; you'll have to take your chance, you know. I have got out of the ways of the club now; I don't know what they can do."

"Well, I'm not nasty partickler," Trelyon said, which was true. "But what has brought you up to London?"

"Well, I'll tell you. It's rather an awkward business one way. I have got a share in some sugar and coffee plantations in Jamaica—I think you know that—and you are aware that the emancipation of the niggers simply cut the throat of the estates there. The beggars won't work; and lots of the plantations have been going down and down, or rather back and back into the original wilderness. Well, my partners here see no way out of it but one—to import labour, have the plantations thoroughly overhauled and set in good working order. But that wants money. They have got money—I haven't; and so, to tell you the truth, I am at my wits' end as to how to raise a few thousands to join them in the undertaking."

This piece of intelligence rather startled Harry Trelyon. He instantly recalled the project which had brought himself to London, and asked himself whether he was prepared to give a sum of 5,000*l.* to Wenna

Rosewarne merely that it should be transferred by her to her husband, who would forthwith embark in speculation with it. Well, he was not prepared to do that off-hand.

They went into the club, which was near the corner of St. James's Street, and Mr. Roscorla ordered a quiet little dinner, the *menu* of which was constructed with a neatness and skill altogether thrown away on his guest. In due time Master Harry sat down at the small table, and accepted with much indifference the delicacies which his companion had prepared for him. But all the same he enjoyed his dinner—particularly a draught of ale he had with his cheese; after which the two strangers went up to a quiet corner in the smoking-room, lay down in a couple of big easy-chairs, and lit their cigars. During dinner their talk had mostly been about shooting, varied with anecdotes which Mr. Roscorla told of men about town.

Now, however, Mr. Roscorla became more communicative about his own affairs; and it seemed to Trelyon that these were rather in a bad way. And it also occurred to him that there was perhaps a little meanness in his readiness to give 5,000*l.* direct to Wenna Rosewarne, and in his disinclination to lend the same sum to her future husband, whose interests of course would be hers.

"Look here, Roscorla," he said. "Honour bright, do you think you can make anything out of this scheme; or is the place like one of those beastly old mines in which you throw good money after bad?"

Roscorla answered, honestly enough—but with perhaps a trifle unnecessary emphasis, when he saw that the young man was inclined to accept the hint—that he believed the project to be a sound one; that his partners were putting far more money into it than he would; that the merchants who were his agents in London knew the property and approved of the scheme; and that, if he could raise the money, he would himself go out, in a few months' time, to see the thing properly started.

He did not press the matter further than that for the present; and so their talk drifted away into other channels, until it found its way back to Eglosilyan, to the Rosewarnes, and to Wenna. That is to say, Mr. Roscorla spoke of Wenna; Trelyon was generally silent on that one point.

"You must not imagine," Roscorla said, with a smile, "that I took this step without much deliberation."

"So did she, I suppose," Trelyon said, rather coldly.

"Well, yes. Doubtless. But I dare say many people will think it rather strange that I should marry an innkeeper's daughter—they will think I have been struck with a sudden fit of idiotic romance."

"Oh no, I don't think so," the lad said, with nothing visible in his face to tell whether he was guilty of a mere blunder or of intentional impertinence. "Many elderly gentlemen marry their housekeepers, and in most cases wisely as far as I have seen."

"Oh! but that is another thing," Roscorla said, with his face flushing

slightly, and inclined to be ill-tempered. "There is a great difference: I am not old enough to want a nurse yet. I have chosen Miss Rosewarne because she is possessed of certain qualities calculated to make her an agreeable companion for a man like myself. I have done it quite deliberately and with my eyes open. I am not blinded by the vanity that makes a boy insist on having a particular girl become his wife because she has a pretty face and he wants to show her to his friends."

"And yet there is not much the matter with Wenna Rosewarne's face," said Trelyon, with the least suggestion of sarcasm.

"Oh! as for that," Roscorla said, "that does not concern a man who looks at life from my point of view. Certainly, there are plainer faces than Miss Rosewarne's. She has good eyes and teeth; and besides that she has a good figure, you know."

Both these men, as they lay idling in this smoking-room, were now thinking of Wenna Rosewarne, and indolently and inadvertently forming some picture of her in their minds. Of the two, that of Mr. Roscorla was by far the more accurate. He could have described every lineament of her face and every article of her dress, as she appeared to him on bidding him good-bye the day before on the Launceston highway. The dress was a soft light-brown, touched here and there with deep and rich cherry colour. Her face was turned sideways to him, and looking up; the lips partly open with a friendly smile, and showing beautiful teeth; the earnest dark eyes filled with a kindly regard; the eyebrows high, so that they gave a timid and wondering look to the face; the forehead low and sweet, with some loose brown hair about it that the wind stirred. He knew every feature of that face and every varying look of the eyes, whether they were pleased and grateful, or sad and distant, or overbrimming with a humorous and malicious fun. He knew the shape of her hands, the graceful poise of her waist and neck, the very way she put down her foot in walking. He was thoroughly well aware of the appearance which the girl he meant to marry presented to the unbiassed eyes of the world.

Harry Trelyon's mental picture of her was far more vague and unsatisfactory. Driven into a corner, he would have admitted to you that Wenna Rosewarne was not very good-looking; but that would not have affected his fixed and private belief that he knew no woman who had so beautiful and tender a face. For somehow, when he thought of her, he seemed to see her, as he had often seen her, go by him on a summer morning on her way to church; and as the sweet small Puritan would turn to him, and say in her gentle way, "Good morning, Mr. Trelyon," he would feel vexed and ashamed that he had been found with a gun in his hand, and be inclined to heave it into the nearest ditch. Then she would go on her way, along between the green hedges, in the summer light; and the look of her face that remained in his memory was as the look of an angel, calm, and sweet, and never to be forgotten.

"Of course," said Mr. Roscorla in this smoking-room, "if I go to Jamaica, I must get married before I start."

The Sun a Bubble.

An American astronomer of great eminence has recently suggested a very startling theory respecting the Sun, presenting that orb to our contemplation as, literally, a mere bubble, though a splendid one and of stupendous dimensions. If this theory were only advanced as a speculation, a crude notion as to what might be, we should not care to discuss it in these pages. But the hypothesis has been based on a very careful discussion of facts, and affords, on the whole, a readier explanation of certain observed appearances than any other which has been suggested. We propose, therefore, briefly to describe the phenomena on which the theory is founded, and then to sketch the theory itself, and some of the most remarkable consequences which must be accepted along with it, should it be admitted.

But first, we shall present some of the ideas which very eminent astronomers have entertained respecting the condition of that glowing surface which astronomers call the Solar Photosphere. It will be seen that the bubble theory of the sun has been far surpassed in audacity by former speculations respecting the great central luminary of our system.

Sir W. Herschel, during the whole course of his observations of the sun, proceeded on the assumption, which perhaps appears a natural one, that the sun has a solid globe around which lies an atmosphere of a complex nature. We shall presently describe his strange ideas respecting the nature of the solar globe; but it will be well to quote first his views as to the atmosphere of the sun, and the analogies he recognised between the sun's atmosphere and the earth's. "The earth," he said, in a passage explaining his view as to the solar spots, "is surrounded by an atmosphere composed of various elastic fluids. The sun also has its atmosphere, and if some of the fluids which enter into its composition should be of a shining brilliancy, while others are nearly transparent, any temporary cause which may remove the lucid fluid will permit us to see the body of the sun through the transparent ones. If an observer were placed on the moon he would see the solid body of our earth only in those places where the transparent fluids of the atmosphere would permit him. In others the opaque vapours would reflect the light of the sun without permitting his view to penetrate to the surface of our globe. He would probably also find that our planet had occasionally some shining fluids in its atmosphere, as, not unlikely, some of our northern lights might attract his notice, if they happened in the unenlightened part of the earth, and were seen by him in his long dark night." He goes on to show how the various phenomena of sun spots can be explained

by the theory that they are due to the occasional and temporary removal of the shining atmosphere from parts of the sun. "In the year 1791," he proceeds, "I examined a large spot in the sun, and found it evidently depressed below the level of the surface; about the third part was a broad margin or plain of considerable extent, less bright than the sun, and also lower than its surface. This plain seemed to rise, with shelving sides, up to the place where it joined the level of the surface. How very ill would this agree with the old ideas of solid bodies bobbing up and down in a fiery liquid, with the smoke of volcanoes, or scum upon an ocean; and how easily is it explained upon our foregoing theory. The removal of the shining atmosphere, which permits us to see the sun, must naturally be attended with a gradual diminution on its borders. An instance of a similar kind we have daily before us, when, through an opening of a cloud, we see the sky, which generally is attended by a surrounding haziness of some short extent."

He was led by considerations such as these to conceive that the real body of the sun is neither illuminated nor heated to any remarkable degree, and may, in fact, be habitable. "The sun, viewed in this light," he said, "appears to be nothing else than a very eminent, large, and lucid planet, evidently the first, or, in strictness of speaking, the only primary one of our system, all others being truly secondary to it. Its similarity to the other globes of the solar system with regard to its solidity, its atmosphere, and its diversified surface; the rotation upon its axis, and the fall of heavy bodies, lead us on to suppose that it is most probably also inhabited, like the rest of the planets, by beings whose organs are adapted to the peculiar circumstances of that vast globe. Whatever fanciful poets may say in making the sun the abode of blessed spirits, or angry moralists devise in pointing it out as a fit place for the punishment of the wicked, it does not appear that they had any other foundations than mere opinion and vague surmise; but now I think myself authorised, *upon astronomical principles*, to propose the sun as an inhabitable world, and am persuaded that my observations, and the conclusions I have drawn from them, are fully sufficient to answer every objection that may be made against it."

Before passing from the views of the greatest observational astronomer that ever lived, we shall venture to quote yet another passage, to show on what feeble arguments he was content to rely, when this favourite theory of his was in question. He pictures to himself and his readers how the inhabitants of our moon, and of the moons circling around Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus, considering the offices discharged by those planets, might be led to regard their primaries as "mere attracting centres, to direct their revolutions, and to supply them with reflected light in the absence of direct illumination." "Ought we not," he proceeds seriously to demand, "to condemn their ignorance as proceeding from want of attention and proper reflection? It is very true that the

earth and those other planets that have satellites about them, perform all the offices that have been named for the inhabitants of these little globes; but to us who live upon one of these planets, their reasonings cannot but appear very defective, when we see what a magnificent dwelling-place the earth affords to numberless intelligent beings. These considerations ought to make the inhabitants of the planets wiser than we have supposed those of their satellites to be. We surely ought not, like them, to say 'The sun,' (that immense globe, whose body would much more than fill the whole orbit of the moon), 'is merely an attractive centre to us.' From experience we can affirm that the performance of the most salutary offices to inferior planets, is not inconsistent with the dignity of superior purposes; and in consequence of such analogical reasonings, assisted by telescopic views, which plainly favour the same opinion, we need not hesitate to admit that the sun is richly stored with inhabitants."

Sir John Herschel went far beyond his father, however, in dealing with the question of the sun's habitability. He adopted a totally different view. Admitting the possible coolness of the real solar globe, and the consequent possibility of the existence of ordinary forms of life upon it, he nevertheless preferred to regard the true inhabitants of the sun, not simply as capable of bearing an intense heat and light, but *as themselves emitting the chief part of the light and heat which we receive from the sun!* This may appear altogether incredible, and, in fact, the terms in which Sir John Herschel expressed the opinion were not quite so definite as those which we have just used. Nevertheless, we believe our readers, after considering the passages we shall quote from Sir John Herschel's statement of his views, will perceive that there can be very little doubt as to his real opinion.

The surface of the sun, when examined with very powerful telescopes, shows a multitude of bright granulations, which, according to Nasmyth, are due to the existence of very bright objects shaped like willow-leaves. We do not here discuss the question whether these solar willow-leaves have a real existence or not. Suffice it that the evidence on the subject appeared to Sir John Herschel to be demonstrative. "The leaves or scales," he said, "are not arranged in any order (as those of a butterfly's wings are), but lie crossing in all directions like what are called spills in the game of spillikins; except at the borders of a spot, where they point, for the most part inwards, towards the middle of the spot, presenting much the sort of appearance that the small leaves of some water-plants or sea-weeds do at the edge of a deep hole of clear water. The exceedingly definite shape of these objects; their exact similarity one to another; and the way in which they lie athwart and across each other (except where they form a sort of bridge across a spot, in which case they seem to affect a common direction, that namely of the bridge itself), all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vapourous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature. Nothing remains but to consider them as separate and independent sheets, flakes, or scales, having some

sort of solidity. And these flakes, be they what they may, and whatever may be said of the dashing of meteoric stones into the sun's atmosphere, &c., are evidently the immediate sources of the solar light and heat, by whatever mechanism or whatever processes they may be enabled to develope, and as it were elaborate, these elements from the bosom of the non-luminous fluid in which they appear to float. Looked at in this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as *organisms* of some peculiar and amazing kind; and though it may appear too daring to speak of such organisations as partaking of the nature of life, yet we do know that vital action is competent to develope at once heat and light, and electricity. These wonderful objects have been seen by others than Mr. Nasmyth, so that there is no room to doubt of their reality. To be seen at all, however, even with the highest magnifying powers our telescopes will bear when applied to the sun, they can hardly be less than a thousand miles in length, and two or three hundred in breadth."

It is not a little singular that the two Herschels, among the ablest reasoners on observed facts, and both highly distinguished for observational skill, should have advanced theories so fanciful as the two we have quoted above. On no other evidence than the fact that the sun, like the earth, is a rotating globe, the elder Herschel was prepared, we will not say to overlook the intense light and heat of the solar orb, but to invent a protecting envelope, of a nature utterly unlike that of any material known to men of science, whereby the solar inhabitants might be protected from the sun's fiery rays; while the younger Herschel, accepting confidently the "solar willow-leaves" (much doubted by other astronomers) was prepared to regard them as organisms whose *vitality* supplies the light and heat emitted by the sun! When theories so startling have been maintained by the acknowledged chiefs of modern astronomy, we may be content to regard without much surprise the theory, strange though it seems at a first view, that the sun is a gigantic bubble.

But we believe that we shall be able to show that the bubble theory has very strong evidence in its favour. Let us first consider the facts which suggested it.

Very soon after Dr. Huggins* had devised a method by which the coloured prominences of the sun could be studied without the aid of a total solar eclipse, astronomers discovered that in many cases the red prominences result from veritable solar eruptions. Some prominences, indeed, are obviously in a condition of comparative quiescence, floating (as it were) like clouds in the solar atmosphere, and either remaining unchanged for hours or even for days, or else undergoing only very gradual processes of alteration. But there are others which are manifestly true *jets*. It is not merely that the shape of these prominences indicates unmistakably that the matter composing them has been ejected with great violence from the sun's interior, but several have been watched during the

* The reference above is to the first detailed statement of the method by which the prominences were to be seen without eclipse, such statement bearing date February 1868, or six months before the method was first successfully applied.

actual process of ejection. They have been seen to rise to a great height, and then either to subside slowly towards the region whence they have been ejected, or else to bend over like the curved jet of a fountain, so descending until a complete arch of red matter has been formed.

Accordingly, we find that Zöllner, Respighi, Secchi, and others who have studied the sun, have agreed in recognising the action of solar eruptive forces in the production of the jet-shaped prominences.

But the most striking evidence of the energy of the sun's eruptive forces was obtained by the astronomer to whom the Bubble Theory of the Sun is due —Professor Young, of Dartmouth College, Hanover, U.S. He was observing the edge of the sun in October 1871, having his telescope (armed with a powerful spectroscope) directed upon a long low-lying band of solar clouds. We say low-lying, but in point of fact the upper side of the cloud-layer was fully fifty thousand miles above the sun's surface, the lower side being not less than twenty thousand miles above that surface. The cloud-layer was about 400,000 miles in length. Professor Young was called away from his telescopic work for half an hour at a somewhat interesting epoch, for he had noticed that a bright rounded cloud was rapidly forming beneath the larger and quieter cloud-layer. In less than half an hour he returned, however; and then, to his amazement, he found that the great cloud had been literally scattered into fragments by an explosion from beneath. The small rounded cloud had changed in shape, as if the explosion had taken place *through* it, and all that remained of the large cloud was a stream of ascending fragments, averaging about three thousand miles in length and about three hundred in breadth. Professor Young watched the ascent of these fragments (each of which, be it noted, had a surface largely exceeding that of the British Isles), and he found that before vanishing (as by cooling) they reached a height of about 210,000 miles. Moreover, he timed their ascent, and from his time-measurements the present writer was able to demonstrate the surprising fact that the outrushing matter by which the great cloud had been rent to shreds, must have crossed the sun's surface at a rate of *at least* five hundred miles per second!

Now no explosion can occur where there has been no repression. When a volcano, for example, gives vent to some great eruption, the energy of the eruption is due to and corresponds with the extent of the repression which had been exerted on the imprisoned gases up to the moment of eruption. When a bullet is fired from a gun, the velocity of its flight depends on the completeness with which before and during the passage of the bullet along the barrel, the escape of the gases resulting from the firing of the gunpowder has been prevented. And although a quantity of loose gunpowder can, in a sense, explode in the open air, yet not only are the effects of explosion altogether less marked than where the exploding matter has been confined, but the explosion takes place in no definite direction, but all around the place where fire had been applied. In order that matter may be propelled along some particular

path there must, before explosion takes place, be an enclosing substance of some sort, the yielding of which at a particular point determines the direction in which the outrushing matter proceeds.

Accordingly, both Zöllner and Respighi, in adopting the general theory that the jet prominences are phenomena of eruption, although they held different opinions as to the cause of eruption, agreed in maintaining that the eruptions must take place through some substance forming a sort of solar crust. Zöllner held that the eruptions are akin to terrestrial volcanic outbursts, while Respighi considered that some kind of electrical action was in question; but neither astronomer doubted that the eruptions sprung from beneath a compact solid or liquid surface.

But there is one great difficulty in the assumption that the sun has a solid or liquid nucleus. The sun is a body whose density is very small by comparison with the earth's, and still more by comparison with the density we should be led to expect from the consideration of the enormous gravitating and compressive energy of the sun's globe regarded as a whole. It may serve to give an idea of this energy to mention the following circumstance:—If an atmosphere constituted like ours surrounded the sun (which, for the moment, we will regard as a cool body), this atmosphere, instead of doubling in density with about 8½ miles of descent as happens with ours, would double some twenty-seven times in that short distance, so that if at the sun's actual surface the pressure were the same as that of the air at our sea-level, then at a depth of 8½ miles (and many of the sun's spots show a depth of two or three thousand miles) the pressure would be increased more than six million times, under which enormous action the air would beyond question be solidified. If we could suppose that the air were not solidified, then we should have to assume that it became compressed to a density exceeding that of our air more than six million times —that is exceeding the density of platinum about four hundred times.

Now the actual density of the sun is but about one-fourth the density of the earth, and is very little greater than the density of water. Remembering that at the sun's tremendous heat vapours and gases could remain as such at a pressure very far exceeding that to which we can subject any gas, and probably when so compressed as to exceed water in density, it is clear that we must regard the sun as in the main a gaseous body. It cannot possibly have a large solid or liquid nucleus, whatever opinion we may form as to its having a solid or liquid crust; for if it had such a nucleus, it would be a much more massive body than we know it to be. As we see, moreover, that it *must* have a solid or liquid crust, we may fairly dismiss the idea that it has any solid or liquid nucleus *at all*.

But there is a great difficulty in understanding how a globe like the sun, not only glowing throughout with the intensity of its inherent heat, but also manifestly the scene of tremendous processes of internal disturbance, can have a crust (in the ordinary acceptance of the term) encircling its vapourous interior. The phenomena presented by the spots show us that the forces acting from within are competent to burst their

way through any existing solar crust; and any ordinary crust would be reduced to fragments under the action of such forces. Moreover, it is not easy to see how a crust thus readily rent asunder and tossed on one side could act the part which the solar enclosing shell or skin certainly does perform, let its nature be what it may. The exceeding definiteness of direction recognised in the jets we have spoken of above, is sufficient to show that the crust bears sway, so to speak, over the internal gaseous nucleus, and that the gases forming this nucleus, though they escape, yet owe the energy of their outrush to the action of the enclosing shell.

The theory advanced by Professor Young seems exactly suited to meet the difficulties here indicated, and to account for those more prominent solar phenomena with which alone at present astronomers can hope to deal successfully.

He considers that the sun has no permanent crust, nor in fact any envelope which can in the ordinary sense of the term be regarded as a crust at all. But inasmuch as the vapourous globe of the sun is, in the presence of what Sir John Herschel has called 'the cold of space,' a process necessarily takes place over its whole outer surface corresponding to the formation of clouds in our skies, when the vapour of water has risen to such a height as to be condensed into the form of visible cloud. The vapours of the sun's globe consist in the main, we know, of the metallic elements, and these metallic vapours would condense into clouds composed of minute globules (or perhaps vesicles) of fluid metal. But such clouds would not usually remain in the simple cloud-form. They would be continually gathering with a rapidity of formation incomparably exceeding that which we recognise in our summer clouds, even when a great storm is approaching. They would become rain-clouds, the rain falling from them consisting simply of molten metals. More and more heavy would this metallic rain become as it descended, even as our own rains are heavier at low levels than at considerable heights. Quite low down, and when approaching the region where the intense heat of the sun's interior would re-vapourise them, the metallic rains would descend in perfect sheets, forming a nearly continuous liquid envelope.

It will be well, however, to give Professor Young's own account of the theory, not only because it is always desirable in presenting views of the kind to avoid the risk of false interpretation, but because in the present instance the subject is one of so stupendous a nature, and surrounded by such great difficulty that the reader will do well to examine the new theory in more than one aspect: "The eruptions which are all the time occurring on the sun's surface," says Professor Young, "almost compel the supposition that there is a crust of some kind which restrains the imprisoned gases and through which they force their way with great violence. This crust may consist of a more or less continuous sheet of rain, not of water, of course, but of materials whose vapours are shown by means of the spectroscope to exist in the solar atmosphere, and whose condensation and combinations are supposed to furnish the solar heat. The continuous outflow of the solar

heat is equivalent to the supply that would be developed by the condensation from steam to water of a layer about five feet thick over the whole surface of the sun per minute. As this tremendous rain descends, the velocity of the falling drops would be retarded by the resistance of the denser gases underneath, the drops would coalesce until continuous sheets would be formed, and the sheets would unite and form a sort of bottomless ocean resting upon the compressed vapours beneath, and pierced by innumerable ascending jets and bubbles. It would have nearly a constant depth in thickness, because it would re-evaporate at the bottom nearly as fast as it would grow by the descending rains above, though probably the thickness of this sheet would continually increase at some slow rate, and its whole diameter diminish. *In other words, the sun, according to this view, is a gigantic bubble whose walls are gradually thickening and its diameter diminishing at a rate determined by its loss of heat. It differs, however, from ordinary bubbles in the fact that its skin is constantly penetrated by blasts and jets from within.*"

Professor Young proceeds to remark, that "the hypothesis leaves the question of the solar spots untouched, but is consistent with either of those most in vogue at present." Here, however, we have to note an interesting circumstance tending to show that Professor Young's theory is one which accords better than any other with the phenomena presented by the surface of the sun. Unknown to Professor Young* a theory not unlike his was suggested four or five years ago by Mr. Stoney, F.R.S., especially to explain the features presented by the solar spots. After carefully examining the evidence, Stoney was led to the conclusion, that the brightest parts of the sun (the bright granules) are regions where there are solar clouds and solar showers, the less bright parts—on which the granules are seen as on a background, are regions where there are clouds but no showers, and the penumbral parts of the spots are regions where there are showers without cloud, that is, where we are looking at the edge of a shower.

In fact, if we consider those features of the solar heat which have been regarded as most characteristic as well as most difficult to explain, we shall find reason for considering Professor Young's theory as affording a very satisfactory explanation of the observed appearances. It has always been regarded as a very remarkable circumstance that the outlines of sun-spots are well defined not only on the inside, where the dark central part of the spot is, but also on the outside, where the spot adjoins on the bright surface of the sun. But this peculiarity is explained at once, if we regard the solar

* Professor Young communicated to the writer a sketch of his theory several weeks before he published it, inviting comments and asking particularly whether any similar theory had been previously enunciated. A great pressure of engagements prevented the writer from replying at the time to this letter, otherwise the published statement of the theory would have contained a reference to the facts mentioned in what follows. In any case, however, it is manifest that the views of Professor Young and of Mr. Stoney are independent of each other, being devised in explanation of two wholly distinct sets of circumstances.

shell-envelope as consisting of a very bright outer layer of clouds, from which metallic rains are falling. The edge of the clouds would then define the outside of the spot's fringe-like border, while the lower limits of the shower would define the inside. It is true that this explanation assumes that the lower limit of the showers falling all round a spot lie closer than the upper; but this would naturally happen if, as is suggested by many circumstances, a spot is a scene where there is a cyclonic downrush of matter from without; for the whirling vapours would sway the upper parts of the downfalling streams more effectively than the lower parts, which parts would therefore tend inwards towards the spot's central region.

It will probably occur to the reader that if heavy solar showers fell in this particular way, then, unless the showers were perfectly continuous (a most improbable contingency) the edges of the shower regions thus brought into view should show streaks radiating from the direction of the spot's centre. To explain our meaning more clearly, suppose a large region of the earth to be covered by rain-clouds from which showers are falling; then suppose a circular part of the cloud-covering removed, and that the rain falling all around this circular space slopes inward towards the middle of the space; now suppose a balloonist to ascend from the middle of the circular space until he is high above the level of the cloud-layer; then he would see below him a great opening in the cloud-layer (white in the sunlight, which would be shining on its outside), and he would see all round the opening and within it the streams of falling rain, forming, as it were, a fringe within the circular gap; and it is manifest that this fringe would show streaks in the direction of the falling rain-streams, that direction as seen by the balloonist appearing to be radial with respect to the circular openings. Now it has long been noted as one of the most remarkable features of the solar spots that their penumbral fringes *are* streaked precisely in this manner.

But again, it will be seen that if falling solar showers were thus thrust outwards at their upper edges, then—since lines drawn towards a centre lie closer as the centre is approached, the penumbra of a spot ought to be brighter at its inner edge than at its outer. The difference would be rendered all the more remarkable because the showers would grow heavier as they descended, according to the law observed in our rain-showers. Now here, again, it is a noteworthy circumstance that long before the bubble theory of the sun had been invented astronomers had recognised the fact that the penumbral fringe of a spot is markedly darker on the outside than on the inside. The observation has been made in such a way as to preclude the possibility that contrast alone would account for the phenomenon. Thus a second, and most remarkable feature of sun-spots, finds its explanation in the new theory. We venture, indeed, to say with some confidence that the appearance in question suffices to throw serious doubts upon all other theories which have hitherto been propounded in explanation of sun-spot phenomena. We do not say that the bubble theory can be regarded as demonstrated on the strength of this

simple fact; but we do assert that no theory hitherto put forward has given any account whatever of the peculiarity in question.

It is manifest, however, that Professor Young's theory gives no explanation of the origin of sun-spots, nor does the theory throw any light whatever on that perplexing subject. Nevertheless, it is impossible to consider the condition of the sun, as presented by the startling theory before us, without being led to re-examine the questions suggested by what we have learned respecting sun-spots. We see confirmed by the theory, the view to which astronomers had for some time been led, that spots are produced by action exerted from without. We perceive reasons for believing that this action is one of great energy, its energy being probably in the main dynamical. It is true that the darkness of a spot must be explained by physical considerations depending on the laws of heat and light, and that chemical relations must be taken into account in dealing with the subject. But we seem to recognise clear evidence of the actual thrusting on one side of solar clouds with their down-pour of metallic rain, where spots are formed. Apart from the considerations relating to the penumbral fringe of a spot, there is a manifest heaping up of the solar cloud-layers all round a spot, where the bright and elevated regions called faculæ are seen. Besides, many spots indicate by their shape and changes of shape the action of most energetic forces, breaking up and thrusting apart, as it were, the masses of clouds which form the light-giving surface of the sun.

Now the various theories, which have been formed to account for the periodic recurrence of spot-frequency, have been based on influences supposed to be exerted in some mysterious manner by the planets. In particular, Jupiter has been held responsible for the great spot-period of about eleven years. Jupiter's period of revolution around the sun being about eleven years and ten months, it has been inferred that he regulates this period of spot-frequency; and a comparison has been made between his supposed action in this respect and the apparent connection existing between our moon's motions and the recurrence of terrestrial volcanic action. It is manifest that the explanation (if such it can be called) thus indicated would correspond with a theory presenting sun-spots as caused by solar forces acting from within outwards, but would by no means accord with a theory indicating as the *source** of solar spots an action exerted from without the solar orb. Moreover, we cannot readily overlook the circumstance that the eleven-year spot-period does not accord exactly with Jupiter's period of revolution. In consequence of this want of agreement, we have not to go far back to find periods when spots have been very numerous, corresponding with the time when Jupiter has been at his nearest to the sun, farthest from the sun, and at his mean distance. This appears to render altogether untenable the theory that there is any connection whatever between Jupiter's distance from the sun and the appear-

* We emphasize the word "source," because whatever opinion may be formed as to the origin of sun-spots, no doubts can be entertained respecting the action of explosive solar forces.

ance of spots upon the sun's surface. And if we give up the theory that Jupiter influences the sun in this manner, it seems impossible to believe in planetary influence at all. So that we may regard ourselves as free to search for other causes, and especially for the possible existence of matter reaching the sun from time to time from without and so producing those openings.

Thus viewing the matter, one might be led to suspect the existence of some as yet undetected comet with its train of exceptionally large meteoric masses, travelling in a period of about eleven years around the sun, and having its place of nearest approach to that orb so close to the solar surface that when the main flight is passing the stragglers fell upon the sun's surface. But then there is this difficulty, that the spots appear always on two zones of the sun's surface, corresponding in a general sense to the temperate zones on the surface of the earth and though it would be easy to account for one such zone by the suggested comet theory, the existence of two is not so readily accounted for.

And yet though no single comet can be accepted in explanation of the observed facts, there are some circumstances which, so soon as the general idea of cometic influence has been mooted, attract our attention as favouring that theory. For example, if we ascribed the sun's spots to comets, we should require that many comets should have paths carrying them very close to the sun's surface; and though few such comets have been detected, yet the law observed in the paths of discovered comets indicate that if we only had an equal chance of detecting comets which passed very near to the sun, they would be found to be very numerous indeed. It has been shown that, if a model of the solar system were constructed and a material particle were set to indicate that point of each cometic path which lies nearest to the sun, the density with which such particles would be aggregated would be found to increase rapidly in approaching the sun.

Again, since there are two zones of sun-spots, we should expect to find the cometic paths showing an average slant to the level of the sun's equator, according with the corresponding slant in the case of lines drawn from the spot-zones to the centre of the sun's globe. Such a tendency has been discovered, though the assigned slant of the cometic orbits is somewhat greater than the theory requires. Let us be permitted to quote, notwithstanding the technicality of its terms, a passage from Dunkin's excellent Appendix to Lardner's "Astronomy," in which this relation is stated: "There are evident indications of a tendency of the planes of the cometary orbits to collect around a plane whose inclination to the plane of the ecliptic is forty-five degrees; or if a cone be imagined to be formed having a semi-angle of forty-five degrees, and its axis at right angles to the plane of the ecliptic, the planes of the cometary orbits betray a tendency to take the position of tangent-planes to the surface of such a cone." We beg those of our readers who eschew cones, semi-angles, and tangent-planes, to trust in our assurance that the sentence just quoted bears the meaning we have assigned to it. So far then the observed relations

among cometic orbits seem to accord with the idea that the meteoric stragglers following on the track of comets may be in some way the cause of solar spots.

But we might also expect, if this theory were the true one, that some great comet which had approached the sun very nearly would give evidence in favour of the theory. For we could hardly but suppose that such a comet would be followed by very large meteoric attendants, and we might expect to find some one or other of these not passing like the parent comet quite clear of the sun, and accordingly occasioning (if the theory be true) a great spot. Such evidence would be particularly striking if it occurred at a time almost midway between two epochs when spots had been very numerous. Now, a comet once appeared which made a singularly near approach to the sun's surface. This was the comet of 1843, which Sir John Herschel thus graphically describes:- "Many, I dare say, remember its immense tail, which stretched half-way across the sky after sunset in March of that year. But its head, as we here saw it, was not worthy of such a tail. Farther south, however, it was seen in great splendour. I possess a picture by Professor Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer-Royal of Scotland, of its appearance at the Cape of Good Hope, which represents it with an immensely long, brilliant, but very slender and *forked* tail. Of all the comets on record, that approached nearest the sun. Indeed, it was at first supposed that it had actually grazed the sun's surface, but it proved to have just missed by an interval of not more than 80,000 miles, about a third of the distance of the moon from the earth, which (in such a matter) is a very close shave indeed to get clear off. There seems very considerable reason to believe that this comet has figured as a great comet on many occasions in history; and especially in the year 1668, when just such a comet, with the same remarkable peculiarity, of a comparatively feeble head and an immense train, was seen at the same season of the year, and in the very same situation among the stars. Thirty-five years has been assigned with considerable probability as its period of return, but it cannot be regarded as quite certain." Now, this remarkable comet having passed thus close to the sun, in the year 1843, which was very nearly the time of fewest spots,* afforded precisely such an opportunity for testing the comet theory of sun-spots as we have indicated above. This would be a time when we should expect no large spot to make its appearance, for it has been observed that the larger spots occur at or near the time when spots are most numerous. But Professor Kirkwood (of Bloomington, Indiana, U.S.) has called attention to the fact, that "one of the largest and most remarkable spots ever seen on the sun's

* This will be manifest from the following numbers, indicating how many new spots were observed in the years between 1836 and 1849:—In 1836, 272; in 1837, 333; in 1838, 282; in 1839, 162; in 1840, 152; in 1841, 102; in 1842, 68; in 1843, 34; in 1844, 52; in 1845, 114; in 1846, 157; in 1847, 257; in 1848, 330; and in 1849, 238. We thus see that 1837 and 1848 were years of greatest spot-frequency, while 1843 was a year of least spot-frequency.

disc appeared in June 1843, and continued visible to the naked eye for seven or eight days. The diameter of this spot was, according to Schwabe, 74,000 miles, so that its area was many times greater than that of the earth's surface." "It would seem," he proceeds, commenting on the facts mentioned above, "that the formation of this extraordinary spot was an anomaly, and that its origin ought not to be looked for in the *general* cause of the spots of Schwabe's cycle." He then describes, as having a possible bearing on the question, the wonderful phenomenon observed simultaneously by Carrington at Redhill and Hodgson at Highgate, in 1859, when two intensely luminous bodies seemed to burst into view on the sun's surface, which moved side by side for about 35,000 miles in five minutes, first increasing, then diminishing in brightness, then fading away. "The opinion has been expressed by more than one astronomer," he proceeds, "that this phenomenon was produced by the fall of meteoric matter upon the sun's surface. Now the fact may be worthy of note that the comet of 1843 actually grazed the sun's atmosphere about three months before the appearance of the great sun-spot of the same year. Had it approached but little nearer the resistance of the atmosphere would probably have brought its entire mass to the solar surface. Even at its actual distance it must have produced considerable atmospheric disturbance. But the recent discovery that a number of comets are associated with meteoric matter, travelling in nearly the same orbits, suggests the inquiry whether an enormous meteorite following in the comet's train, and having a somewhat less perihelion distance, may not have been precipitated upon the sun, thus producing the great disturbance observed so shortly after the comet's perihelion passage."

We will not further pursue this theme, however, interesting though the considerations it suggests may be. We have, indeed, been led somewhat far away from the bubble theory of the sun with which we began. But after all, in the present state of our knowledge of the great central luminary of the system, we can hardly be too ready on the one hand to look around for all side lights which may perchance help us to see our way towards the truth, or too watchful, on the other hand, lest we be led astray. So that we need offer no excuse for directing attention to the association which may possibly exist between solar and cometic phenomena, though we must at the same time caution the reader against the supposition that such an association can be regarded as in any sense demonstrated.

It cannot, indeed, be too often insisted upon that in discussing so stupendous an object as our sun, the scene of processes so marvellous, and the centre of activities so tremendous, we must not expect to find simple theories of its constitution or of the changes which it is undergoing. It is altogther a mistake for the students of astronomy to range themselves on this side or on that when diverse solar theories are advanced, as though necessarily the truth must lie on one side or the other. Whether the sun-spots are phenomena of indraught or of outrush; whether the corona is due to expulsive forces, to perpetual solar

auroras, or to meteoric systems in the sun's neighbourhood; whether the sun's photosphere is solid, liquid, or gaseous; whether his heat is due to meteoric down-pour, to the gradual contraction of his globe, or to chemical changes: these and a hundred other such questions may be made the subject of endless controversy, simply because the truth does not lie altogether on one side. Such controversy cannot but be useless in the present state of our knowledge. It does, indeed, occasionally happen even in dealing with solar phenomena that a decision can be pronounced decisively between contested theories, so soon as certain considerations have been fully taken into account. A noteworthy instance was afforded by the long-continued discussion whether the corona is a solar appendage: a question which really admitted of being answered definitely on the strength of a few not very recondite mathematical considerations, long before eclipse photography disposed of it. But such cases are the exception, not the rule. Now that we know how exceedingly complicated is the structure of the sun; that processes are taking place within his globe which are not merely wonderful in their extent and variety, but are probably for the most part quite unlike any that we are or can ever be familiar with; when we see how the tremendous attractive energies of the sun by which the great gaseo-liquid mass which sways our system is compressed towards its centre, contends continually with mighty expulsive forces by which vast masses of matter are visibly projected from the sun, and with still mightier repulsive forces, whose action we see in the phenomena of comets; when again we consider that all the elements we know probably exist in the sun in quantities such as we can form no conception of, and in forms with which we are unfamiliar, it is mere folly to insist on adopting definite theories respecting the sun's condition. Let us remember that in all probability we see in the sun a state of things partially resembling what existed in our own earth countless ages before the changes began which our geologists find so difficult to interpret; and seeing thus that we have a state of things removed from us in this sense by a practical infinity of time, existing on a globe too remote in space to be studied by any really satisfactory methods of research, and presenting only its glowing surface for our examination; seeing also that although some of the forces at work there are nominally those whose action we are acquainted with, yet even these act on a scale which must render their operation as utterly unlike that of the same forces on earth as though they were forces of a totally different nature, while lastly we cannot doubt that forces utterly unknown to us are at work in the sun, we may well look doubtingly on the easy and simple (but contradictory) theories of the sun which are from time to time presented by students of science in this country and abroad. After many years of patient labour, we shall begin to comprehend more clearly than at present how utterly incomprehensible is the great centre of our system; for though many difficulties which now perplex us may then have been removed, each difficulty mastered will be found to have introduced others greater than itself.

Women and Charitable Work.

Popular errors are hard to kill, and long after they have been left for dead they are found to be as fresh and vigorous as ever. There is a pleasant belief abroad that the world is very much wiser than it used to be in the matter of charity. Once charity was only a fine name for indiscriminate and unintelligent almsgiving; now the evil of this sort of benevolence is thoroughly understood, and kind-hearted people are everywhere working to promote the real good of their poor neighbours. It would be easier to accept this comfortable conclusion if it were not for the continual recurrence of two mistakes which seem hardly compatible with it. The first is that charity is easy work; the second is that it is a kind of work for which women have a natural aptitude, which enables them to dispense with special training. It is assumed, for example, that as soon as a young lady has left the schoolroom she is to associate herself, as a matter of course, in the various good works set on foot by the clergyman of the parish. In London perhaps she has engagements of a more serious nature which have a paramount claim on her attention, or there may be difficulties about her walking alone which check the free play of the benevolent emotions. But if she lives in the country and has time to spare, perhaps has even time on her hands, she takes to district visiting and Sunday-school teaching as naturally as to long frocks and dining late. Even if she is only in the country for part of the year, she expects to have work found for her as soon as she arrives. Indeed, she would lose the esteem of her right-minded friends if she expected anything else. It is taken for granted that she is qualified to deal with every form of distress and poverty, because she has the kind heart with which all women are credited in right of their sex. No one seems to imagine that good intentions, and that natural and amiable vanity which is pleased with the consciousness of giving pleasure, may not be a sufficient equipment for dealing with cases of individual distress, involving perhaps social problems of the utmost complexity. She can always have recourse in any difficulty to the clergyman or the clergyman's wife, and with these authorities in the background there can be no danger of any serious blunder. In London, as has been said, youth counts rather as a disqualification for charitable work; but there is a large supply of older women, married and single, from which recruits can be drawn as they are wanted. Indeed, but for district visitors and ticket distributors what would become of that mass of imposition and incapacity which forms so large an element in London poverty? If charity were suspended for a single year, there must

be a wholesale emigration from the East End. There is a curious similarity in this respect between charitable work and music. Men are not supposed to take up either unless they feel specially drawn to do so; but women play the pianoforte and visit the poor as a matter of course. So long as this is the case it is allowable to distrust the union which is alleged to have grown up between charity and common sense. The first offspring of such a marriage would be distrust of the machinery by which charity has hitherto been administered. There is simply no alternative but to do this or to distrust charity itself. Either we have been wrong in thinking it possible to do good to others, or the ways in which we have tried to do them good have been badly chosen. As to the failure of the effort, from one cause or another, there can be no question.

Ever since the monasteries were dissolved the English gentry have been more or less looking after the poor, and it would be hard to say in what the poor have been the better for it. On the contrary, in proportion as they have been out of the range of charitable attention they have risen above the need of it. Nowhere has English benevolence had so free a course as in the agricultural villages, and nowhere has it been so little glorified. Nowhere has English benevolence been so completely distanced as in the manufacturing towns, and yet, with all their drawbacks, it is the manufacturing towns that suggest whatever hope there is for the future of the working classes. When a wealthy and educated class interests itself in the well-being of a poor ignorant class, three results may be expected to follow. In the first place there ought to be a visible improvement in the material condition of the poor. In the next place they ought to be better taught. In the third place they ought to be more kindly disposed towards the class which has stood their friend. Are these consequences to be seen in those agricultural villages in which more than in any other parts of the country there has been systematic supervision of the poor by the rich? The controversies growing out of the conflict between farmers and labourers have furnished an answer to this question. The condition of the peasantry has been closely observed. We know the sort of houses in which they live. We know what kind of provision they have made for old age. We know how long their children attend school, and what are the causes which keep them away from school. We know what amount of gratitude they feel to the squire and the squire's family. The agricultural labourer is worse lodged and worse fed than the cattle he tends. He has not so much education as a well-trained animal. His idea of a provision for the future is summed up in the belief that the parish will see that he does not starve. And if his sense of obligation to the classes above him is not very keen, it can hardly be denied that it is strictly commensurate with the services rendered. Let us suppose that the existence of such a class as the English labourer has just been made known to us for the first time, and that we have been asked to point out how his condition may be bettered through the agency of kind-hearted

neighbours. The first thing that suggests itself is, that he should be enabled to earn more money, and as a necessary condition of this that he should be encouraged to move to other districts where wages are higher, or—this applies especially to the younger men and to newly married couples—to new countries in which he may in the end come to be an owner as well as a tiller of the soil. Yet until Mr. Girdlestone set the example, there was no attempt made to promote either migration or emigration. Year after year benevolent ladies saw, and pitied, and tried to relieve the distress around them without so much as asking themselves whether the cause of it was not the disproportion between the work and the workers. Year after year they married off their favourite maids to promising young labourers without enquiring whether the customary process of degradation was inevitable as well as customary. Instead of advising the girl to devote her savings, and to urge her lover to devote his, to making a start in Canada or the United States, they assumed that they were to go on living where they had lived all their lives. The next evil to be attacked is the bad housing of the labourers, and here perhaps it may be said that charity is powerless. To rebuild a village is beyond the scope of a lady's purse, and probably beyond the scope of her husband's or father's purse either. But time and trouble might have effected something even without the direct application of money. If benevolent persons had but recognised that bad lodging is one of the main obstacles to the labourer's improvement, it is inconceivable that so little should have been done to remove it. There would have been no need for newspaper correspondents or blue books to reveal the magnitude of the evil. Voluntary charity would have done the work of a Royal Commission, and have filled the newspapers with reports of what was to be seen in nearly every village.

It will be said, perhaps, that as regards education charity has not been behindhand. It has helped to cover England with schools, and, long before the State recognised that it had any duties in the matter, the children of the labourers were largely taught by private subscription. As regards the provision of schools this is true, but it is not true as regards the attendance of the children. It is only now that we are beginning to learn that the agricultural labourers might as well have gone without education altogether as have had the apology for education which is all that has fallen to their share. If benevolent persons have been really busy all this time in getting children to school, how is it that their failure has been so complete? Have they used their influence with parents to induce them to keep their children at school instead of sending them into the fields the moment that they could earn a penny or two by scaring birds? Have they tried to persuade the farmers not to employ children at an age when they ought to be in school? Two answers may be imagined to these questions, but neither of them really meets the case. It may be said that the needs of the poor are so great that those who live among them feel that it is better for a child to contribute in however

small a degree to the family income than to be at school; instead, therefore, of trying to persuade the farmer not to tempt children into the fields, charity has rather busied itself in finding work for them at the earliest possible moment. Or it may be said that the desire of the parents to supplement their scanty wages by their children's, and of the farmers to get cheap labour, is so keen that neither argument nor persuasion has been of the least avail. On the first hypothesis charity stands condemned of ignorance as to what really promotes the well-being of the poor; on the second it stands condemned of tamely acquiescing in what it knows to be mischievous. Those who believe that it is better for children to earn a few pence weekly this year at the cost of incapacitating themselves from ever earning more than a few shillings weekly in years to come must be wholly wanting in that power of forecast which is indispensable to true kindness. Those who see the error of this view, and see also their own inability to cope with it, ought to have asked help from stronger hands. How is it that there has not long ago come from the wives and daughters of the country gentry a cry for compulsory education? If their zeal for the poor had been a zeal according to knowledge, they must have seen the need of education. If they had tried to bring parents or employers to see it likewise, they must long ago have recognised the impossibility of obtaining it without the aid of Parliament. What is charity worth when it leaves the labourers as ignorant as it found them? Another point in which the condition of the labourer urgently needs improvement is his habit of trusting to the rates for support in every emergency. There are few commonplaces more generally accepted in theory than the importance of training children in habits of self-help; but in the country self-help is usually treated as identical with help from the parish. Of course so ingrained a tendency is not to be rooted out in a moment; but have charitable persons even tried to root it out? Have they set themselves to discourage the poor in whom they are interested from applying to the guardians? Have they urged any guardians over whom they have influence to be chary in giving out-door relief? Here and there of course there may be instances of persons acting in this way, but as a rule unwillingness to apply for out-door relief is looked on as folly, and unwillingness to grant it is looked on as cruelty. Happily the poor, especially poor women, have occasionally a vein of independence which makes them reject the notion of applying for parish pay, but where such cases exist it will generally be found that they have had to stand out against the repeated advice of those who ought to know better not to be too proud to do as others do. And whenever a reforming spirit comes over a board of guardians, and the lists of persons in receipt of out-door relief are gone over strictly, there is sure to be a chorus of complaints from all the district visitors that this or that widow has been mulcted of the halfcrown which she has come to regard as her right.

The failure of charitable action has been most conspicuous in the country, because in the country circumstances have been peculiarly favour-

able to success; but the experience of towns is not really different, or at all events is only different in so far as the results, though equally mischievous, have usually taken another form. The special fault of charity in the country is its tendency to encourage poverty; the special fault of charity in town is its tendency to encourage imposition. The two vices flow naturally from local surroundings. In the country a poor man's income is accurately known. He is in work, and his wages are so much; his wife is in work, and she earns so much more; one or two of his children are at work, and their contribution makes up such and such a total. It is the same with what he receives from other sources. All that is spent in charity in the village goes through one or two hands. The squire's daughters know what the clergyman's wife has given, or is going to give, and the clergyman's wife is equally well informed as to the distribution of the money that comes from the great house. In towns neither of these securities against fraud is available. It is easy to represent the earnings of the family as smaller than they really are, and the stream of charity flows throw so many channels known and unknown that the woman who pleads that but for a particular dole she and her children must starve may tell the same story to different persons every day in the week. A proof that this must often happen is the extreme difficulty of getting the poor, especially widows, to move from the east of London even to places where there is a certainty of their finding fairly paid work. If their stories, or rather if any one of their stories, about themselves were strictly true, it seems impossible that this unwillingness should exist. After every allowance has been made for dislike of the unknown, there remains the fact that large numbers of the poor cling obstinately to a place where on their own showing they are scarcely able to keep body and soul together. The explanation is that though the incomes to which they will own in talking to A or B are separately barely sufficient to support life, yet the two taken together are amply enough to maintain them not in comfort, but in idleness, which habit has made much more important to them than comfort. There is very little risk that A or B will ever become acquainted with the fact that they have common pensioners, partly from the antagonism which charitable agencies so often cherish towards each other, and partly from the fact that in London want—at all events want of the kind we are speaking of—is too modest to receive visits at home. It prefers to wait on its benefactors.

Still, when we say that the encouragement of imposition is the characteristic vice of town charity, we do not mean that it is free from that encouragement of poverty which is the characteristic vice of country charity. Wherever the district visitor goes, improvidence and shiftlessness abound. The system of district visiting is a system of doles which are too small to be of real use. A lady goes into four cottages or rooms in succession. In one perhaps there is a man out of work; in the next there is a widow who, work as hard as she will, is not able to earn enough to keep her children in food; in a third the husband has had a long ill-

ness; in the fourth the children are starving because their father has spent his week's wages in drink. Here is a whole nest of problems waiting for solution. And how does the district visitor set to work to deal with them? By the gift of a shilling a family all round. There is nothing to be said against her intentions. These four shillings represent possibly real self-sacrifice on her part. They are all that she has to give, and when she has given the last she is probably made unhappy by the thought how few shillings remain in her purse and how many families there are in her district who have an equal claim upon her kindness. But though the motive of the gift is excellent, the effect of it may be most mischievous. Each of the recipients is encouraged to hope for similar help in future, and is so far indisposed to any serious effort to change his way of life. The man who is out of work postpones moving to a district where labour is more in demand. The widow continues willing to take wages which, but for the doles with which they are eked out, would be too low to command labour. The invalid, it is true, just manages to keep out of the workhouse, but in doing so perhaps throws away his only chance of being cured. The drunkard is pleased to find that his children have had necessary food found for them whilst he was spending his money at the public-house, and is spared the discredit, and possibly the inconvenience, of their being taken care of by the parish authorities. Alms thus distributed do positive mischief, and even in cases where they fall short of this they are so broken up that they fail to do any good. As each week goes by each of these families has an additional loaf of bread to satisfy hunger, and a few pence more to stave off starvation. But they are not really the better for this assistance. The persons who immediately gain by it are the ratepayers, not the poor, and even the ratepayers are losers in the long run by reason of the tendency of such charity to keep stationary the class which draws most largely on poor law relief. Concentrated upon any one family, these shillings might have done real good. They might have helped emigration, or given the sick the comforts which they need if they are to regain their full strength. But the district visitor would be shocked at the thought of such favouritism. The fund she has at her command must be made to benefit as many as possible, and the result is as though the water which would fertilise a field were scattered in spoonfuls over a parish.

It may be said that a great deal of charity really aims at encouraging habits of thrift and independence on the part of the poor. No doubt much of the time which ladies devote to good works is spent in organising and managing clothing clubs, penny banks, sick funds, and the like. These are usually spoken of as means of teaching the poor to help themselves. As a matter of fact, they are too often ways of helping the poor under cover of teaching them to help themselves. With a few exceptions here and there, these undertakings are only transparent impostures, and are well understood to be such by those who profit by them. One general feature runs through them all. The poor are paid to be thrifty. They are encouraged

to put by a penny by finding that it is transmuted into twopence. They are taught to regard saving as a favour conferred on their betters, for which consideration in the shape of exorbitant interest must be duly given. From first to last they are treated as children with a money box. Their taste for accumulation has to be stimulated by timely donations, lest they should open the lid too soon and be disgusted at finding nothing inside beyond the original coin. Habits of saving do not grow up under such discipline as this. The only quality that it cultivates is the intellectual virtue of taking the length of their benefactors' shoes. Even where the principle of these societies is sounder, and the money really belongs to those of whose savings it is supposed to be made up, far too little is left for the members to do. In these matters the true function of charity is not to manage, but to give suggestions and counsel. Instead of this, the whole conduct of the concern usually remains in the hands of the benevolent person who has started it. This system is probably fruitful in material results, for the accounts are made to balance by some expedient less revolutionary than the repudiation of inconvenient liabilities. But the educational value of the experiment is reduced to nothing. The art of helping yourself is confounded with the art of allowing others to help you.

In this review nothing has been said of the baser forms of charity—of the cases, that is, in which doing good to the poor is merely regarded as an occasion for display or amusement. The faults and blunders referred to have been those of people who honestly mean what they profess, and who might be trusted to do better if they knew better what to do. It is this fact that makes the case discouraging. There would be nothing wonderful in finding out that the people who get up charity balls or fancy fairs, or are active members of voting charities, are doing only mischief. The painful thing is that the same thing may be said of so many who are really anxious that others as well as themselves should reap some fruit from their labours.

Two alternative conclusions may seem to follow from this review. Either charity is a delusion which the world had best be disabused of, or women are not fitted to be the ministers of charity. There is hardly, it may be said, a form of benevolence that has gained a strong hold upon kind-hearted persons which is not open to this kind of criticism. It is allowable to feed men whom starvation has brought to death's very door, because if they are not fed they will not be alive by the time that their enlightened benefactor has determined what to do with them; and it may be allowable to help very old people, because, as they are past learning better habits, they cannot be made worse than they are already. But all other works of mercy can be shown to do more harm than good, and the sooner the public come to understand this the less the poor are likely to suffer in the long run. Or supposing that this conclusion is rejected as too sweeping, and certain forms of charity are excepted from the general condemnation, how are we to escape the second alternative? A work which is largely left to women, and young women, cannot always be in

accordance with the latest economical theories. They have to deal with particular cases and with pressing needs, and it is impossible for them to be always thinking about general laws and ultimate results. The more charity becomes a matter of consideration and investigation, the less suited it is for the sex to which it is at present chiefly entrusted.

Both these inferences are false, and the first is not even plausible. The essence of charity is doing good to one's neighbours, but by a curious perversion of ideas it has come to include doing harm to one's neighbours, provided it be done with an ostensibly kind motive. Yet, in spite of this confusion, anything which does harm to the object which it professedly intends to benefit is not charity, but a counterfeit of charity. It may deceive many excellent persons, it may evoke as much devotion and self-sacrifice as the genuine virtue evokes, but it is none the less a counterfeit. Let us take an extreme instance, and suppose that a destitute population are being fed from a shipload of imported bread, which has been kindly bought up by a rich man whose heart has been moved by the spectacle of distress. Those who eat of this bread usually die, but the kind distributor is persuaded that these deaths are due to starvation, and is only impelled to get the loaves unpacked more quickly. By-and-by there lands from another ship, that has followed the ship which brought the bread, a man who has seen the loaves made, and knows that by accident they were made with poisoned flour. As soon as he gets to shore he tries to stop the charitable work that is going on by telling the purchaser of the loaves what he knows about them, and pointing to the deaths that have followed upon eating them by way of confirmation. What should we think if, instead of suspending the distribution, at all events until the story had been enquired into, the owner of the loaves refused to give any heed to what he heard, bade the man who brought the news carry his medical theories elsewhere, and went on poisoning the destitute population as fast as before? No one would call such an act as this charity. It would be set down, according to circumstances, to wickedness or madness. Yet this is exactly analogous to what thousands of benevolent persons are doing every day. They are spending time and money in the relief of distress, and because they will not spend thought in addition they are increasing distress instead of lessening it. There was a time when they might have pleaded ignorance as an excuse, but that time is past. The effects of what they are doing are known, and have again and again been pointed out to them. They may not have turned a deaf ear to all warnings and remonstrances, but they cannot say that none have been addressed to them. No one who professes to take any interest in the well-being of the poor has any right to disregard the discussions which are going on all around him as to the effect of this or that method of aiding them. When an old woman goes on administering quack remedies in a case of dangerous disease, and the patient dies, she is fortunate if she escapes trial and punishment, and it is not held a justification that the quack remedies of to-day were the approved simples

of two centuries ago. Something has been learned about medicine since those days, and even old women are expected to know that there are better doctors to be had than themselves. It is just the same with women, old and young, who go on dispensing charity in ways which have been proved to be mischievous. They may not be able to improve on them without help, but they are bound to know that there are wiser heads than theirs in the world, and that the inconsiderate benevolence which was once thought to be charity has now been proved to be the exact opposite of charity.

But the unmasking of the impostor which has appropriated the name of charity does not detract from the merits of the genuine virtue or narrow the field of its operations. On the contrary, it may safely be said that as we know more about the nature of charity our conception of its function becomes more, not less, extensive. The reason why so much that passes for charity is so unsatisfactory, alike in its aim and in its results, is not that people give too much to the service of the poor; it is that they give too little. They give odds and ends of time and odds and ends of thought. They think rather of what is pleasant to themselves than of what is profitable to those whom they are trying to help. They look for direct reward in the way of grateful words and smiling faces. They like to live in an atmosphere made pleasant by their own activity, and with the objects of their bounty constantly in view. The consequence of this is that they come to think much more of what will please people than of what will do them real service. If they went on the opposite system, and thought more of what will do people service than of what will please them, they would have to take a great deal more trouble and get fewer thanks in return. The field of charity is almost coextensive with the field of human action. Everything that can raise the condition of that great mass of poverty and ignorance which forms the lowest and largest stratum of civilised societies comes under the definition of charity. Everyone, from the legislator who makes laws for the benefit of the poor to the young girl who persuades a maidservant to put some of her wages into the savings bank instead of spending it on finery, is an agent in the same great work. Two classes of persons only are excluded from it—those who are too idle to help others at all and those who are too careless or too self-satisfied to help them wisely. No one can escape from the obligation of doing good. It is only the shape of the obligation that varies, not its stringency. The great social machine has to be worked by human hands, and those who are directly employed in keeping it in motion may have no time to give to what is usually called charity. But in so far as they are doing necessary work of any kind they are leaving others free to give their time to this object, and are earning money which either keeps others from needing charity or provides them with the means of dispensing it. The world could not go on if there were no politicians and no professional men, any more than a campaign could be conducted if the War Office were to send all its clerks into the field. But in proportion as people have time

at their command they have to consider how to use it so as to carry on the enterprise in which all men are enlisted—the making the world better and happier than they found it. This is the real responsibility of leisure. Men whose occupations are marked out for them have no choice in the matter. They go forth to their work and to their labour until the evening. But all persons, whether men or women, who can determine, or in so far as they can determine, their occupations for themselves, must, if they would be anything better than cumberers of the ground, do what lies in them to promote directly the object which busy men are promoting indirectly.

In this way we get at the fallacy of the second inference which, as has been said, may seem to follow from the demonstration of the vices of charity as at present understood. It cannot be true that women are not fit ministers of charity, because they, far more than men, have the leisure which makes charity, in the direct sense of the term, possible, and in making it possible raises it to the rank of a duty. Leisure is the especial possession of women of the upper classes. It is equally, no doubt, the possession, and equally the abused possession, of large numbers of men; but still the proportion of women who have nothing especial to do over women who are occupied in necessary employments is very much greater than in the case of men. There are other differences between the sexes which point in the same direction, but this one is all-sufficient for the purpose. If the meaning of charity were properly understood, and its scope properly appreciated, there would be no more complaints from women about having nothing to do—no more complaints, that is, except from women who stand in need of maintenance as well as of occupation. In every direction they would see work waiting to be done, and the only thing wanting would be the knowledge how to set about it. Happily the means of gaining this knowledge are not beyond their reach. Its attainment needs only the modesty which comes from conscious and admitted ignorance. This qualification it is the object of the present paper to help in creating, in however small a measure. It is not meant to deter any woman from devoting herself to charitable work. The more that do so the better, whether for themselves, or for society. It is only meant to lead women to ask themselves, Is the work that I am doing really charitable? What is the end that I propose to myself in doing it? In what way do I expect the poor to be the better for my services? Have I good reason to think that the results I wish to see produced are produced, or that, if produced, they are really as beneficial to the poor as I have hitherto taken for granted that they will be? As was said just now, no woman who devotes herself in any degree to charitable work ought to take so little interest in the subject as to be ignorant that all the old forms of charity have of late years been undergoing a searching investigation, and that many of them are altogether discredited. When once a process of this kind has begun, there is no saying off-hand how far it will go. It is

the first instance of applying the experimental method to acts of benevolence; and when tested by results, those which were thought to have the best justification may prove the most mistaken. When a navy has to be reconstructed, it is impossible to suspend ship-building until the absolutely best form of armour-plating has been decided on; and, in the case of charity, it would be equally impossible to do nothing for necessitous persons until the best method of helping them has been discovered. But, just as a prudent naval constructor keeps his mind constantly open to new ideas, and is always on the watch for possible defects and possible improvements in the models with which he is familiar, so a wise administrator of charity will be always eager to enlarge her knowledge—to compare what she has been doing with what others are doing—to derive, alike from her own experience and from theirs, fresh means of judging her own past work and fresh hints for improving her future work. If once the enquiring and teachable spirit is there, she will find no lack of competent guides. There is not a single charitable enterprise of any real merit now going on which does not find the greatest obstacle to success to be the difficulty of finding workers to carry on existing operations and to begin new ones. The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Those who would benefit by the knowledge which is constantly accumulating must be prepared to part company with many cherished fancies, and to deny themselves much that has heretofore given them pleasure. But they will reap their reward in the sense that their work is work that will bear enquiry alike as regards the ends at which it aims and the means by which it proposes to secure them. Hitherto they have been obliged to shut their eyes to consequences, and to seek in the goodness of their motive some compensation for the mischievous results of their acts. In future they may have to wait long before any results appear, but they will be sustained in their watch by the certainty that, when they appear, they cannot be other than satisfactory.

Keeping Faith.

CHAPTER I.

The First Meeting.

Between fifty and sixty years ago Tunbridge Wells was still in the sunset of its glory. It might be, nay, it had always been, a cockney paradise, but the cockneyism continued more or less aristocratic so long as royal dukes paid flying visits to the Pantiles and the Assembly Rooms, and princesses tarried for weeks enjoying the benefit of the waters. Tunbridge was found the proper combination of nature and art, of chalked boards and grey rocks, green tables and green fields, early and late hours, which the gay world of a former generation took to mean rural felicity—supposing rural felicity existed. The impression lasted after the master of the ceremonies had become a mere decorous cipher in comparison with the half gallant, half brutal tyrant of former days.

Still, parties of ladies of quality drove out on the pleasant country roads to Frant or to Southburgh in the state of a barouche-and-four, though they had ceased to masquerade in the guise of orange-girls and farmers' daughters, when courtiers chaffered with buxom, red-cheeked wenches at the fair on Tunbridge Common. So late as 1807 a young lady of fortune eloped with a player from Tunbridge Wells. Hostile meetings continued to be held among the more remote golden gorse of Rusthall, by gentlemen in high-necked, short-waisted coats, and plaited shirt-frills, like that held by Castlereagh and Canning nearer town, where the least that could be apprehended was a flesh wound or a shot in the thigh, not counted dangerous. The Kent Fencibles were in great favour with the whole country, as who could tell when their services might not be required, to repel an invasion?—in the news at home and abroad of the sailing of ships and the marching of armies; how the great Walcheren expedition had gone out, and come back again, minus the victims of ague; how Sir Sydney Smith was heard of here and Sir Arthur Wellesley there; and the news from Germany were bitterly bad, but the tidings from Russia highly cheering. The old world had not lost its gay and strong, no, nor its coarse, tints.

During one autumn, between fifty and sixty years ago, there arrived at Tunbridge Wells, under the guardianship of her grandmother, Lady Stukely, Lady Catherine Fortescue, of Oxham. Lady Catherine was a young orphan of rank, fortune, and beauty, whose parents had both died in her infancy; while the estate of the earl, her father, had descended, by

the terms of its entail, to Lady Catherine, separate from the earldom, which passed to the heir male.

Lady Stukely and Lady Catherine lodged in a house, already old-fashioned, on the Parade, with its gable fronting the street, its red roof, its balcony, commanding a fine view of the early and late promenaders (though national and world-wide lions were no longer so obliging as to stalk and roar in packs below), and of the charmed fountain in the centre of the street, where the merchants of the four seasons in flowers, vegetables, and fruit, were wont to congregate on the steps amidst splendid, luscious bits of Flemish colouring—made up of tiger lilies and creamy white roses, of radishes and cucumbers, of crimson strawberries, or amber and amethyst plums.

The same accommodating balcony commanded the constant tide of company going to and coming from the principal hotel opposite, and, in addition, restful glimpses of quiet parklike woods and pastures, by comparison, far away. The Tunbridge assemblies began at so primitive an hour that Lady Catherine, seated before her high, narrow mirror, could glance out, while it was still barred with sunshine and shadow, at the busy outer world, in which she took a lively interest, where, to promenade with her grandmother and her grandmother's friends to the music of the band, to watch the general company, to do a little shopping, were treats only next in order to this long-looked-forward-to, eagerly-anticipated ball.

Of course Lady Catherine was very foolish and ignorant, though she was supposed to be solidly instructed in the information and accomplishments of her rank and era; she had been put through a good deal of reading, English, French and Italian, and she could accompany herself, tunefully, on the harp when she sang "Di Tanti Palpiti" and "Said a Smile to a Tear." But she was charmingly natural, and charmingly lovely at this period of her life, with a loveliness which is difficult to describe; it was at once so fresh and so dainty, like that of a lady's smock out in the Tunbridge meadows; but the lady's smocks were to be found in thousands, and Lady Catherine, taking her all in all, was unique. She had a very fair, shell-pink-tinted complexion, contrasting, pleasantly, with chestnut-brown hair, small delicate features belonging to a little oval face, and cheerful grey eyes opening in a mixture of wonder and trust on what seemed to her a happy world where, orphan as she was, and without brother or sister, she had never wanted friends.

Lady Catherine's dress was of dim pearly-white crape, with a border worked in silver shells, and looped up with silver cords and tassels. She wore on her shapely girlish head a small white satin hat, inclining a little over one temple, with a single Prince of Wales' feather fastened in its band by the Oxham cluster of diamond wheat-ears which Lady Catherine's mother had worn on her presentation to young Queen Charlotte. The little hat alone might have made its wearer look like an Arcadian shepherdess, but its combination with the single wavy white feather standing up in front of the tiny ear, as the finishing stroke of the taste of the day

the fashion of Queen Charlotte herself, while she received a more fragrant incense to sweeten the tit-bits of scandal between the deals, in the assurance of this night's establishment of her grand-daughter's prospects. Now and then Lady Stukely turned her glass lovingly on her charge, and there was Lady Catherine, fair as a lily, and fresh as a rose, with that feather of hers nodding and beckoning in fine majesty and harmony. The girl was really dancing, not walking, with tripping, bounding feet, by the aid of an interminable succession of happy, gallant, and—as Lady Stukely took care—fitting partners down the central alleys and up the side vistas of double performances of the Triumph and the White Cockade, the genuine English country-dances still holding their ground against the mongrel quadrille which had displaced the courtly minuet. Waltzing had been brought over into England before the wane of the Great Empire, and of the first famous waltzers at Almacks, there was one at least, who, like Sir Christopher Hatton of Elizabethan memories, whatever he might owe to his heels, was not to risk his whole fame on them. But such ladies as Lady Stukely were slow to award their patronage, in the persons of their young daughters and grand-daughters, to round dances.

Lady Catherine did not weary. She was so naïve as to admire the chalked boards and the decoration of the ceiling, as well as the company; the increasing smell of white soup and negus did not disgust her, but she was never too engrossed to notice the various entrances into the rooms to the last—that of a party of officers, no doubt, the same Sally Judd had seen alighting in the inn-yard.

The group was made up of several marked men of rank and fashion, imposing, from their easy, nonchalant, critical air, if from nothing else; advanced as the evening was, their progress up the crowded room created a new sensation. Soon Lady Catherine experienced that she had a formidable rival as the observed of all observers, not only in the group where union was strength, but in its central figure, a dark, bold, bright-looking young man, wearing gracefully enough the uniform of a staff officer. Who was he? What had he done, to be on a staff at his age? Was he indeed the Lord Robert Luttrel, a son of the Duke of Salop's? —the same son who had done so dashing a thing in the course of the taking and burning of Copenhagen last year, and he, a mere boy, from his mother's apron-string? Yes; and it was said he was a favourite of Sir Arthur's, and now he had come across from Portugal, only ten days ago, with dispatches. He was fresh from the seat of war and the glorious victory of Vimiera, the supposed bearer of news of friend and foe—private and political—of the rival kings, Ferdinand and Joseph; of Wellesley, Crawford, and Hill; of Junot, Kellermann, Murat, though he might well have been many a league from these worthies.

What was any heroine—lovely, young Lady Catherine, heiress of Oxham, even, to such a hero? It ought to have been hard to have her honours snatched from her, and more than divided with another, on the very first night of her reign; but Lady Catherine, though accustomed to

be made much of, delighted to confer favour and afford delight, and had a magnanimous soul at seventeen. With but the most infinitesimal and transient pang, at which she laughed and blushed the next moment, she fell unresistingly into the background, as her neighbours had done before her; nay, went before them in hurrying with the hurrying multitude to offer her gracious homage to the king, in whose honour she was a deposed queen.

Lady Catherine suffered from the scarlet-fever epidemic of the period. She had imbibed the infection from so mature a patient as Lady Stukely, who, discreet in all else, was a red-hot patriot; as warlike in her proclivities as if she had been the aged widow of a fighting baron of the eleventh or twelfth century, and not of a peaceful, turnip-growing, road-mending viscount, who had belonged properly to the eighteenth century, ere it was convulsed by the French Revolution. Lord Robert was the first real live hero that Lady Catherine's lustrous eyes had rested and feasted on; and she discovered, within a very few minutes of reviewing his perfections, that it was far better to have found a hero than to be a heroine, to give glory than to receive it. What! had that sunburnt eager face, not above four or five years older than her own, looked bravely and without blanching on scenes of horror and affright, while the slim, almost boyish body stood unwaveringly the brunt of hail-storms of shot, and charges of bayonets, keeping its post and rallying the troops behind, till a commanding officer, who had received his death-wound, was dragged out of fire, to die in the shelter of the stack of wood which served for house and bed, and the last fainting memories of home. Lady Catherine's eyes grew larger, her face rosier, and then her generous sympathy had its reward.

After strolling a little up and down, staring merrily—not impudently—in return for the stares he got, chatting frankly with those who were presented to him, only elevating his eyebrows occasionally at the questions addressed to him, and being guilty of but a few irresistible *canards*, Lord Robert's eye was caught by the face and figure of Lady Catherine Fortescue. He stopped short, smitten like an impulsive boy, not knowing who she was, like a barbarian from the wars, bent on improving his opportunity, like the spoilt child of fortune that he had been.

"Who is that lovely girl—that divine creature?"

"Lady Catherine Fortescue—young beauty—high rank—great fortune—just come out;—Tunbridge had the honour of her bursting bloom;—first appearance in the rooms this very night—tremendous impression—nothing like it since the Gunnings—Maulesdale, Sir Raaf, Five-bar Meredith, greatest catches here—all been attracted, fluttering in the train—all caught, who knows?" was the information communicated in emphatic fragments to the inquirer.

"By George!" protested the hero—it was uncertain whether he swore by the king or the saint; taking in everything, one would have said by the king—"I must dance with her."

"Im—possible; engaged three, six, nine deep. Old dragon of a grandmother, Lady Stukely, inspected and fixed the engagements."

"Then I shan't dance with any other lady," threatened Lord Robert, in a pet, preparing to loll sulkily against the wall.

In the first glow of his herodom, and of the satellites' hero-worship, to thwart and vex Lord Robert as if he were an ordinary mortal was not to be thought of. The Duke of Salop's son—this son the fighter of his country's battles, the conquering hero, or at least the hero who would conquer in the end—deserved better at the hands of his grateful admirers. One obliging fellow flew to the master of the ceremonies to make known to him the dilemma; another, an elderly enthusiast, a friend of Lady Stukely's, apprized her of the laurels which she and Lady Catherine were in danger of losing, and whispered to the guardian and grandmother that Lord Robert, though a younger son, inherited a good estate in Sussex from his maternal grandfather; a third, the shrewdest helper of all, observed that one of Lady Catherine's promised partners had forgotten himself and her, and was incapable of profiting by his good fortune (a casualty not unheard-of in those days), having in the meantime indulged in such rash potations in the refreshment-room that he had been carried senseless from the field to his lodgings, along with other vanquished men overtaken by the same evil hap. What so easy as for Lord Robert, by these combined forces, to step into the vacant shoes of his unconscious predecessor *hors de combat!*

Lord Robert danced with Lady Catherine, certainly without shirking a couple of the two overflowing sets. Then he stood beside her looking at her, leaning over her, talking to her, till all the other couples had danced loyally and exultingly after the couple of the night. In the advantage of establishing innocent familiarity in the matter of rational acquaintance, these old-fashioned country-dances were, in comparison with modern dances, what stage-coach was to railway travelling. In evidence, recall how Henry Tilney had opportunity to play with and fall in love with the tastes of Catherine Morland, and how Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet even discussed and disputed principles, all between the "cross hands and down the middle and up again."

Next, by another stroke of a benign destiny, that dance concluded just as the signal was given for supper, and Lord Robert had the supreme happiness of escorting Lady Catherine to the supper-room, of serving her with chicken and claret cup, and of convincing himself, more and more to his own undoing and enslavement, how perfect his companion was in more than her young beauty or her gifts of fortune. How unaffected, how ingenuous, what a good listener he found her! She did not compel him to rack his brains and go back to last year's topics—what she thought of Catalani's singing and Young's playing, for the great Yorkshire election and Sir Francis Burdett's triumphal car, would not have been much in a young lady's way. He might have stumbled on the Duchess of Brunswick's arrival in the country, and what effect the event might

have on the differences in a certain royal household. All women, young and old, were interested in a man and wife's quarrels. But he was saved the trouble. Lady Catherine was prepared to hang breathless on his stories of transports, disembarkations, marches, and bivouacs among cork trees and vineyards; above all, of a pitched battle. She put quick, intelligent questions in the sweetest of voices, laughed melodiously, turned away her Rubens' or Reynolds' head in its hat and feather, to hide the tender moisture which dimmed her bright eyes, when he knew his own were wet, as he entered into the tragic spirit of some of his narratives, and talked with a little faltering in his simple eloquence.

Lady Catherine came back from her first ball with a head as nearly turned and a heart as nearly lost as ever Lady Catherine's or young beauty's head and heart were in danger of capitulation on the first summons. Why, Lady Stukely had not been proof against the spell! Her own old head and heart were not quite in her keeping after all she had greedily swallowed of "the handsomest, best-matched young couple that eyes were ever set on;" of "the old fascinating romance in love at first sight warming the heart;" of "Dan Cupid's being worth all the heralds and gentlemen-ushers in the world, at the same time when they and Dan shook hands and walked in good-fellowship, it was a sight for an admiring universe—a sight almost more than this great human quality-world could stand without dying of envy;" of "none but the brave deserving the fair, from the days of Alexander downwards." But Lady Stukely was old, and a little worn out with all this success and unexpected excitement. She retired to rest so soon as she had reached her lodging.

Lady Catherine, too young to feel fatigue, to entertain a doubt, all palpitating with emotion—very naturally, but very suddenly and swiftly, awakened, could not go to bed and to sleep immediately, and wanted to talk over her adventures, to recount what she could of her impressions. In her brotherless, sisterless state she had none to talk to but Sally Judd, and so to Sally, considerably overcome with sleep, yet with patience and interest to spare, as she unfastened Lady Catherine's dress and brushed her hair, Lady Catherine sat and prattled about the ball. And Sally was sharp enough to remark how perpetually the name of Lord Robert Luttrel—"the gallant young soldier from the Peninsula, you know, Sally"—slipped out, late as had been Lord Robert's attendance at the rooms, how his figure superseded and overshadowed other figures, how Lady Catherine's cheeks and eyes burned and glowed as she mentioned him.

Sally said to herself, in her plain way, "The business is done. My mistress has met her master if so be he choose to be the happiest and one of the powerfullest gentlemen in England. It's like he'll consent, for Lady Catherine and Oxham are not gifts to be cast away. Shouldn't I like to get a look at him! but that will come in good time."

Even after Sally had been dismissed, Lady Catherine could not come down from her giddy height of happiness, but flitted about in her white dressing-gown with her twinkling bare feet, reproaching herself for

not settling to say her prayers, peeping out at the stars, opening the window an inch for a little air. It was at that moment when, retreating hastily from the sound of the last feet of the ball-goers on the Pantiles below, that Lady Catherine detected a quick step, which all at once lingered. At the same time she distinguished a well-remembered voice that had thrilled her not two hours before, in the pauses of the interminable dance, and amidst the clatter of forks and knives and tongues in the supper-room. The voice said now (could she forgive its loud openness and vehement assertion?), "Is this where she lives? By George! I shall never rest till I have secured her for my wife."

CHAPTER II.

Another Meeting.

Very little more was called for in order that Lord Robert might fulfil his pledge. A few promenades on the Pantiles, the Assemblies, a morning service at church, a bewitching gipsey tea among the frowning, yawning, tangled beauties of the High Rocks, a delightful dreamy ride through oak and birch coppice, and high green hollies to the ruins at Bayham, were all the occasions on which Lady Catherine and Lord Robert saw each other, before the two promised to become one, and to be true to each other for life and death.

Lord Robert rejoined the army; Lady Catherine was presented at Court, where she was rallied by royal lips on her interest in the war, and went through her first season. Four or five years of lovers' separation followed. Then, like a thunder-clap in a summer sky, unclouded as it had seemed the moment before, the blow fell—so simple a blow, yet so grievous and manifold in its consequences, a trial so difficult to realize in our days of merciful modifications and compensations.

Fifty or sixty years since sounds so short a time for us to go back and regard with wonder and pity troubles which hardly come near the present generation, working on natures which were not trained as ours have been. Yet not more than sixty years ago the entire colony of New South Wales was in danger of perishing from a single sailing vessel's not arriving in time to supply the colonists with a fresh store of provision to replace their last ounces of musty flour and salt pork.

Jenner had lived to receive a vote of thirty thousand pounds from Parliament ere this, but small-pox was still, what God forbid it should be again, one of the scourges of the human race. This scourge met Lady Catherine face to face, waiting in her youth, bloom, and happiness for her lover, whom she was persuaded—not in audacity and arrogance, but in sheer inexperience—Heaven must spare. The small-pox spared her life and sight, but took everything besides, save what belonged to that immortal part of her which neither plague nor pestilence could reach; the

small-pox branded her as St. Dunstan is said to have seared with hot irons the face of the Saxon maiden, Elgitha, before setting her free to risk an encounter with her royal lover.

At twenty-one, Lady Catherine Fortescue was a bodily wreck, sickly, emaciated, her exquisite complexion irretrievably ruined, her delicate features coarsely blurred, her fine eyes heavy and dim; at her age, in her circumstances, belonging to a class and to a stage of civilization in which personal advantages were very potent, the sentence of reverse was frightful.

Lady Catherine rose so far to meet it. The first time she was able, her trembling hand caught up her gold pen. She had often twirled it happily in her white fingers, considering what pretty, bashfully restrained, but transparently-loving phrases she should use to her ardent lover, whose effusions, however debateable in grammar and orthography, never failed in passionate recollections of her beauty, and anticipations of its perfection, with fervent vows of allegiance to the balsam cheek, the dove-grey eyes, the rosebud of a mouth, the soft warm cloud of brown hair—all of which had suffered eclipse and transformation to the drawn purple lips, and the thinned locks.

Now Lady Catherine wrote straight to the point:—

"I have had the small-pox, to my great grief, for your sake, as well as for my own, since, though I have recovered, I am quite altered—I doubt, even, if you would know me again. At least, you would never more call me your little beauty. I have become a very plain girl. My mirror told me so whenever I was allowed to look into it, and my friends could not deny the evidence. In addition, I fear my health is shattered, I continue to be so weak and to have so many ailments. I know you are sorry for me, as I am sorry for you in your disappointment, but as neither you nor I could have anticipated the melancholy end to our plans, I do not think it is right—believe me, I recoil from binding you to a marred lot that God, who sent it to me, will give me strength to bear alone. But at your age, in our rank, with its obligations, to persist in tying yourself to a disfigured, dull, and fretful invalid (for I am all that, Lord Robert), would not only be very foolish, it would be unsuitable and injurious. Don't let your generosity mislead you. Take back your word, and I shall take back mine. I shall never blame you, even in thought. I shall always take the deepest interest in your welfare, and perhaps one day we may meet as friends. I am not fit to write more, except that I pray God to bless you, now and ever.

"CATHERINE FORTESCUE."

If there is anything hard, stiff, and unnatural in this letter, remember that it was written by a creature not only stricken, but gagged. Lord Robert realised that, when he replied in gallant indignation—not resentment—that no change in his Lady Catherine could make any change in him. He should only hold her dearer for what the world and she might

err and esteem her loss. He would not restore her her word, though she restored him his twenty times. Had such a proposal come from a man, though he had been Lord Robert's commander-in-chief, Lord Robert would have considered it so heavy a reflection on him as a man and gentleman that he would have had the proposer "out" before the day was done, risking a court-martial. But to stop Lady Catherine's dear mouth, he would move heaven and earth to get leave, or he would be tempted to take French leave and share the fate of Sir Home Popham and his squadron. He would marry her out of hand, and have her off with him to recruit in a mild climate, at Lisbon, or nearer the forces, where many English ladies ventured to take up their abode and make English colonies, to be within reach of their husbands.

Poor young Lady Catherine in her twenty-second year was comforted a little by that warm, swaggering letter which she read, till it was so wasted by severe wear and tear that she had to encase it in two tiny boards, bound with blue ribbon, in order that it might be preserved to be buried with her. (Was it buried with her, after all?) But in the meantime she began to look up faintly, to have some heart in her recovery, some hope in her life. There was reviving trust, struggling successfully with despair in her pathetic question to her faithful Sally.

"Do you think Lord Robert will be able to bear the sight of me, Sally? He cared so much for my looks; men put so much weight on looks. They were all that he had time or perhaps inclination to see in me. But if he never thought of Oxham, and you know he was too noble and true to do that, don't you think it is just possible that he may not heed my looks, and care only for me—that part of me which is left to love him so?"

Lady Stukely was pleased, though she was also dubious and nervous. Then Lord Robert sent a courier express to announce that he had got leave, he would sail in a few days, and if his packet were not caught by the enemy, he would be in England at the heels of his messenger before February was ended. But as he must be out in Spain again early in April, he urged that every preparation should be made beforehand, and his bride ready to marry on a moment's warning, and start like a soldier's wife with her husband on his campaigning.

Lady Stukely and Lady Catherine were gone with the first breath of spring to Tunbridge Wells to try what the waters would do to retrieve the desolation of disease, as people had recourse then to mineral wells for all trivial and all fatal complaints of the most widely varied type—vapours, consumption, gout, atrophy, crediting the waters with miraculous power which only an angel troubling them could have conferred. Tunbridge Wells out of season was as good a locality as another for the celebration of a marriage, which, even without regard to its history, was to be consummated quietly and speedily in the temporary reaction of fashion from the splendid coach-and-six, twelve best men and twelve best maids, troops of friends and heaps of livery of the Grandisonian era. But Tunbridge

Wells in spring,—before primroses were thick as daisies on every grassy bank, blue-bells gemming each dingle, cuckoos calling in the Penshurst and the Erridge woods,—was another place from Tunbridge in the bounty of autumn. It was bare as its hop poles, and bleak as its common.

Yet marriage was never so abridged of joyous honour and festivity, or even so clogged with drawbacks, the scene of it was never so ungenial as to prevent its being the one marriage in the world to its own particular bride. Let it be ever so shorn and spoiled, it will serve to occupy and interest her in its details for days and weeks beforehand. This peculiarly feminine fascination was a boon to Lady Catherine, above all at the date when Lord Robert announced himself as near as Dover, where he was to sleep and recruit from a stormy voyage, purposing to post to Tunbridge Wells so as to reach it two days before the wedding-day, and one day before their graces of Salop, and sundry lords and ladies Luttrel, travelling in their family coach, arrived for the same happy event.

Lady Catherine was fain to tax to the uttermost her slight strength, with the arrangement of pelisses and morning gowns, wraps, mails, the procuring of the special license, the reading of the marriage settlement, the bridal chariot, the hotels where it was to stop, the accommodation for Sally Judd, (how Lady Catherine clung to Sally) and Lord Robert's man in the rumble, the letters which were to be written to Lady Stukely from ship-board, and in the moment of landing in a foreign city,—all to escape the thought of the imminent meeting which had been imagined in every way except the one way in which it came about, and longed for till the longing died out in sick reluctance.

By a species of instinct and unspoken sense of fitness, such as belongs to a sensitive temperament, Lady Catherine had dressed herself for the occasion in a costume as far removed as possible from that of the soft white crape and shining white satin hat with its nodding feather in which she had danced before Lord Robert at his first ball. The cold spring winds and her feeble health, together with the hour just after noon, afforded excuse for the poor young woman's shrouding her defects in what was then called a great coat of dark bottle-green cloth, trimmed with black fur, to which belonged a plaited frill tied by a neckerchief up to her ears, and a round cap drawn down to her nose. In this guise Lady Catherine looked like a living mummy when she rose cold and trembling at the sound of carriage wheels dashing up and stopping at the door. Lady Catherine had proffered an irresistible request to her grandmother that the interview with her bridegroom should be private. Thus alone and unsupported—not hurrying with flying feet and panting breath, but standing nailed to the floor of the artificial, flimsy, lodging-house drawing-room, Lady Catherine heard again with sharpened, strained sense, after all that had come and gone, his voice with its mellowness roughened by anxiety and eagerness, his step spurning the space between them, resounding and drawing nearer, till he burst into the room—a man in the

to the dress of a young lady in Lady Catherine's position, constituted the fairy princess who was starting to meet the prince. The hat and feather took nothing from the youthfulness of the aspirant, while it added to that youthfulness an indescribable element of maidenly dignity and stateliness perfectly compatible with modesty and sprightliness.

Lady Catherine looked at herself with innocent complacency, and in her trepidation arranged a fold here and a knot there, beat time with eager foot to imaginary dance airs, drew on her gloves to try and beguile the interval which must elapse before Lady Stukely, who had been anxiously overlooking her grand-daughter's toilette, should have completed her own. Lady Catherine had pledged herself to sit as steady as a rock, not rise and run about and plume herself like a restless bird disarranging its fine feathers in the pluming. But the restlessness was getting the better of her, and even healthy young Lady Catherine was in danger of becoming nervous over her *debût*. Her fleeting glances out of the window were fixed by an arrival at the hotel opposite, and she seized on the diversion.

"Sally, what is going on? what do you see there?" Lady Catherine called to her elderly maid, who, now that she had discharged the most onerous functions that her office was ever likely to bring her, unless it should be on Lady Catherine's wedding morning, had retired to a seat at the window and methodically resumed her work, only intermitting it to keep a watchful, admiring eye on her young mistress. This Sally, with regard to whom Lady Catherine did not fall into the hard unfeminine habit, just coming into practice, of dropping the Christian name and employing merely the surname, was a link between the picturesque Abigails of Pope's "Betty" type and the commonplace or tawdry *soubrettes* represented by "Jenkins," or "Dawson," "Dupont," or "Schmidt." Sally Judd was not a *dame de compagnie* as imperious, whimsical and saucy as her mistress, neither was she an enterprising hairdresser's or milliner's assistant, whose merit lay in her fingers, or, at farthest, in her eyes. Sally could not only say her church catechism and the responses in her prayer-book by heart, read and write and cast up accounts, she could bake and brew, distil scents and medicine, besides being an adept at plain sewing. She had some experience of real human life; she was trustworthy and sensible; though not a *dame de compagnie*, she was a companionable woman.

Sally, sitting in her good, sober gown, white apron and cap, sewing busily, responded to her mistress's appeal.

"There is a travelling chariot just entering the inn yard, Lady Catherine, and a party of five officers alighting."

"Oh, dear, how late they will be," Lady Catherine clasped her hands and regretted, disinterestedly; "they will miss the opening by the Master and her Grace and all the earlier sets."

"But you will not miss 'em, my lady." Sally comforted her mistress with a short, half-bashful compliment.

"Who, I? I daresay I shall not notice the naughty men who come late. I shall have more to do."

Lady Catherine pretended to give herself airs, laughing joyously at the pretence. But Lady Catherine did notice these late-comers in spite of everything—her own triumphant success, among other impediments, —partly because the strangers were worthy of notice, partly because there is a fate and a Providence in men and women's destinies.

Lady Stukely joined Lady Catherine, as desirable a chaperon as could be made by wisdom, reputation, the hoary crown of a high head, the splendour of the brocade, lace, and jewels,—above all the finish of the manners of the old régime, and individually by the innate truth and tenderness of a staunch old spirit, which no long apprenticeship to worldly ways could render more than superficially worldly.

The ladies walked as the evening was fine, and in the lingering inadvertent homeliness of the artificial world on this side of the Channel, which capped the mock simplicity maintained by a violent effort on the revolutionized shores of France. Lady Stukely and her grand-daughter were attended by a couple of men-servants, to prevent their being too pressingly waited on by a crowd of respectable admirers among the townspeople, whom such a spectacle entranced "mightily," to the doors of the Assembly Rooms. Later in the evening, the same townspeople would not think it beneath their dignity to get up, on the Pantiles without, rival country-dances to those of the nobility and gentry within, jigged blithely to the music, floating through the open windows, of the one instrumental band. Was it not a social world, though it was also a world of extravagance, excess, sometimes of vile debauchery, on which the setting sun shone between fifty and sixty years ago?

The due buzz of admiration had been given on Lady Catherine's entrance, the due throng of solicitations for the honour of an introduction, and the felicity of being her partner, had followed. Other stars of the season—the beautiful Miss Heathcotes, understood to be penniless adventuresses, but so much the rage, and so likely to wed, in unwary moments, enamoured dukes, or earls at least, that rash squires could not refrain from singeing their wings, Miss Larkins, the great city heiress, for when were city heiresses not in the field? and they were more conspicuous, more marked by mammon ugliness in a former than in the present generation—subsided discreetly, or with a little unavailing angry twinkle giving way to the unmistakeable rising sun.

Lady Stukely, after taking care to do a little severe weeding to the candidates for her grand-daughter's notice, saw her present task in a manner happily ended, and her goal attained. She delegated its slight remaining duties to qualified allies, and in consideration of her own years and honourable labours, allowed herself to be seated at the principal card table. There Lady Stukely arranged her cards like a high-bred connoisseur in card playing, who had played at the loo table of the late Princess Emily, and was elegant rather than offensive in taking snuff after

the fashion of Queen Charlotte herself, while she received a more fragrant incense to sweeten the tit-bits of scandal between the deals, in the assurance of this night's establishment of her grand-daughter's prospects. Now and then Lady Stukely turned her glass lovingly on her charge, and there was Lady Catherine, fair as a lily, and fresh as a rose, with that feather of hers nodding and beckoning in fine majesty and harmony. The girl was really dancing, not walking, with tripping, bounding feet, by the aid of an interminable succession of happy, gallant, and—as Lady Stukely took care—fitting partners down the central alleys and up the side vistas of double performances of the Triumph and the White Cockade, the genuine English country-dances still holding their ground against the mongrel quadrille which had displaced the courtly minuet. Waltzing had been brought over into England before the wane of the Great Empire, and of the first famous waltzers at Almacks, there was one at least, who, like Sir Christopher Hatton of Elizabethan memories, whatever he might owe to his heels, was not to risk his whole fame on them. But such ladies as Lady Stukely were slow to award their patronage, in the persons of their young daughters and grand-daughters, to round dances.

Lady Catherine did not weary. She was so naïve as to admire the chalked boards and the decoration of the ceiling, as well as the company; the increasing smell of white soup and negus did not disgust her, but she was never too engrossed to notice the various entrances into the rooms to the last—that of a party of officers, no doubt, the same Sally Judd had seen alighting in the inn-yard.

The group was made up of several marked men of rank and fashion, imposing, from their easy, nonchalant, critical air, if from nothing else; advanced as the evening was, their progress up the crowded room created a new sensation. Soon Lady Catherine experienced that she had a formidable rival as the observed of all observers, not only in the group where union was strength, but in its central figure, a dark, bold, bright-looking young man, wearing gracefully enough the uniform of a staff officer. Who was he? What had he done, to be on a staff at his age? Was he indeed the Lord Robert Luttrel, a son of the Duke of Salop's? —the same son who had done so dashing a thing in the course of the taking and burning of Copenhagen last year, and he, a mere boy, from his mother's apron-string? Yes; and it was said he was a favourite of Sir Arthur's, and now he had come across from Portugal, only ten days ago, with dispatches. He was fresh from the seat of war and the glorious victory of Vimiera, the supposed bearer of news of friend and foe—private and political—of the rival kings, Ferdinand and Joseph; of Wellesley, Crawford, and Hill; of Junot, Kellermann, Murat, though he might well have been many a league from these worthies.

What was any heroine—lovely, young Lady Catherine, heiress of Oxham, even, to such a hero? It ought to have been hard to have her honours snatched from her, and more than divided with another, on the very first night of her reign; but Lady Catherine, though accustomed to

be made much of, delighted to confer favour and afford delight, and had a magnanimous soul at seventeen. With but the most infinitesimal and transient pang, at which she laughed and blushed the next moment, she fell unresistingly into the background, as her neighbours had done before her; nay, went before them in hurrying with the hurrying multitude to offer her gracious homage to the king, in whose honour she was a deposed queen.

Lady Catherine suffered from the scarlet-fever epidemic of the period. She had imbibed the infection from so mature a patient as Lady Stukely, who, discreet in all else, was a red-hot patriot; as warlike in her proclivities as if she had been the aged widow of a fighting baron of the eleventh or twelfth century, and not of a peaceful, turnip-growing, road-mending viscount, who had belonged properly to the eighteenth century, ere it was convulsed by the French Revolution. Lord Robert was the first real live hero that Lady Catherine's lustrous eyes had rested and feasted on; and she discovered, within a very few minutes of reviewing his perfections, that it was far better to have found a hero than to be a heroine, to give glory than to receive it. What! had that sunburnt eager face, not above four or five years older than her own, looked bravely and without blanching on scenes of horror and affright, while the slim, almost boyish body stood unwaveringly the brunt of hail-storms of shot, and charges of bayonets, keeping its post and rallying the troops behind, till a commanding officer, who had received his death-wound, was dragged out of fire, to die in the shelter of the stack of wood which served for house and bed, and the last fainting memories of home. Lady Catherine's eyes grew larger, her face rosier, and then her generous sympathy had its reward.

After strolling a little up and down, staring merrily—not impudently—in return for the stares he got, chatting frankly with those who were presented to him, only elevating his eyebrows occasionally at the questions addressed to him, and being guilty of but a few irresistible *canards*, Lord Robert's eye was caught by the face and figure of Lady Catherine Fortescue. He stopped short, smitten like an impulsive boy, not knowing who she was, like a barbarian from the wars, bent on improving his opportunity, like the spoilt child of fortune that he had been.

"Who is that lovely girl—that divine creature?"

"Lady Catherine Fortescue—young beauty—high rank—great fortune—just come out;—Tunbridge had the honour of her bursting bloom;—first appearance in the rooms this very night—tremendous impression—nothing like it since the Gunnings—Maulesdale, Sir Raaf, Five-bar Meredith, greatest catches here—all been attracted, fluttering in the train—all caught, who knows?" was the information communicated in emphatic fragments to the inquirer.

"By George!" protested the hero—it was uncertain whether he swore by the king or the saint; taking in everything, one would have said by the king—"I must dance with her."

"Im—possible; engaged three, six, nine deep. Old dragon of a grandmother, Lady Stukely, inspected and fixed the engagements."

"Then I shan't dance with any other lady," threatened Lord Robert, in a pet, preparing to loll sulkily against the wall.

In the first glow of his herodom, and of the satellites' hero-worship, to thwart and vex Lord Robert as if he were an ordinary mortal was not to be thought of. The Duke of Salop's son—this son the fighter of his country's battles, the conquering hero, or at least the hero who would conquer in the end—deserved better at the hands of his grateful admirers. One obliging fellow flew to the master of the ceremonies to make known to him the dilemma; another, an elderly enthusiast, a friend of Lady Stukely's, apprized her of the laurels which she and Lady Catherine were in danger of losing, and whispered to the guardian and grandmother that Lord Robert, though a younger son, inherited a good estate in Sussex from his maternal grandfather; a third, the shrewdest helper of all, observed that one of Lady Catherine's promised partners had forgotten himself and her, and was incapable of profiting by his good fortune (a casualty not unheard-of in those days), having in the meantime indulged in such rash potations in the refreshment-room that he had been carried senseless from the field to his lodgings, along with other vanquished men overtaken by the same evil hap. What so easy as for Lord Robert, by these combined forces, to step into the vacant shoes of his unconscious predecessor *hors de combat?*

Lord Robert danced with Lady Catherine, certainly without shirking a couple of the two overflowing sets. Then he stood beside her looking at her, leaning over her, talking to her, till all the other couples had danced loyally and exultingly after the couple of the night. In the advantage of establishing innocent familiarity in the matter of rational acquaintance, these old-fashioned country-dances were, in comparison with modern dances, what stage-coach was to railway travelling. In evidence recall how Henry Tilney had opportunity to play with and fall in love with the tastes of Catherine Morland, and how Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet even discussed and disputed principles, all between the "cross hands and down the middle and up again."

Next, by another stroke of a benign destiny, that dance concluded just as the signal was given for supper, and Lord Robert had the supreme happiness of escorting Lady Catherine to the supper-room, of serving her with chicken and claret cup, and of convincing himself, more and more to his own undoing and enslavement, how perfect his companion was in more than her young beauty or her gifts of fortune. How unaffected, how ingenuous, what a good listener he found her! She did not compel him to rack his brains and go back to last year's topics—what she thought of Catalani's singing and Young's playing, for the great Yorkshire election and Sir Francis Burdett's triumphal car, would not have been much in a young lady's way. He might have stumbled on the Duchess of Brunswick's arrival in the country, and what effect the event might

and the newspapers. Lord Robert was marching and picquetting under broiling suns and rainy moons, reconnoitring by hedges and in ditches, faring on chance fare, playing his part in bloody battles and desperate assaults, having the shine taken out of the man as well as out of his uniform. The peace of 1814 came and the allies were in Paris where Lord Robert tarried with other disengaged gentlemen. Another whirlwind broke over the world when the lion was loose again, and the destiny of a quarter of the world to be settled once more. The battle of Waterloo followed, with the hurrying of frantic couriers east and west, north and south, to Russia, Italy, England and America, and with one little quaintly, coldly formal, yet familiar, school-boy note to Lady Catherine beginning "Dear Lady Catherine," and ending "Your obedient servant, Robert Luttrel"—certifying that a great battle had been fought and won, peace was about to be established at last, and Lord Robert Luttrel, whose name Lady Catherine bore, was among the triumphant survivors. A throb of duty and dignity, perhaps born of discipline, despatched that letter; a throb of duty and dignity acknowledged it fitly. Nay, more, when Lord Robert was safe back in England only to find that his agent, from having indulged freely in the land mania and other manias which collapsed with the peace, had spent the money which Lord Robert, not being a gambler who could gamble anywhere and at any odd moment, had been too continuously and busily engaged on active service to fail to spare, he was persuaded to apply through his agent and his wife's agent for help from Lady Catherine! Why not? He had not robbed—not to say beaten her—even to the extent marriage might have permitted him to do. He had not wronged her wilfully. Destiny had been against them—a great mutual misfortune had separated them—he thought. It was true that he only proposed to borrow from Lady Catherine a loan to which she would have been heartily welcome from him, had she required or sought it, at any time all these years.

Lady Catherine did not hesitate for a moment over this request. She wrote a generous letter; she sent immediate and imperative orders to her agent to do what he could for Lord Robert in his embarrassments incurred while he was serving his country.

Lord Robert's circumstances were righted, and more years—a decade, two decades—slipped by rapidly, as the years gather momentum and speed, in multiplying, till they reach the appointed span of each man and woman. During the interval Lord Robert and Lady Catherine had not met again even in public, for they were not like a state couple compelled of necessity to parade their misery and make a mock show of polite greetings in high places and thoroughfares.

Both lived mostly in the country at their different seats, where there were several shires linked together to form a barrier between them. When the lady and the gentleman were in town, naturally they were in different sets. They heard of each other—shyly—and a little curiously; Lord Robert of Lady Catherine, as a good plain woman, who might have grown

not settling to say her prayers, peeping out at the stars, opening the window an inch for a little air. It was at that moment when, retreating hastily from the sound of the last feet of the ball-goers on the Pantiles below, that Lady Catherine detected a quick step, which all at once lingered. At the same time she distinguished a well-remembered voice that had thrilled her not two hours before, in the pauses of the interminable dance, and amidst the clatter of forks and knives and tongues in the supper-room. The voice said now (could she forgive its loud openness and vehement assertion?), "Is this where she lives? By George! I shall never rest till I have secured her for my wife."

CHAPTER II.

Another Meeting.

Very little more was called for in order that Lord Robert might fulfil his pledge. A few promenades on the Pantiles, the Assemblies, a morning service at church, a bewitching gipsey tea among the frowning, yawning, tangled beauties of the High Rocks, a delightful dreamy ride through oak and birch coppice, and high green hollies to the ruins at Bayham, were all the occasions on which Lady Catherine and Lord Robert saw each other, before the two promised to become one, and to be true to each other for life and death.

Lord Robert rejoined the army; Lady Catherine was presented at Court, where she was rallied by royal lips on her interest in the war, and went through her first season. Four or five years of lovers' separation followed. Then, like a thunder-clap in a summer sky, unclouded as it had seemed the moment before, the blow fell—so simple a blow, yet so grievous and manifold in its consequences, a trial so difficult to realize in our days of merciful modifications and compensations.

Fifty or sixty years since sounds so short a time for us to go back and regard with wonder and pity troubles which hardly come near the present generation, working on natures which were not trained as ours have been. Yet not more than sixty years ago the entire colony of New South Wales was in danger of perishing from a single sailing vessel's not arriving in time to supply the colonists with a fresh store of provision to replace their last ounces of musty flour and salt pork.

Jenner had lived to receive a vote of thirty thousand pounds from Parliament ere this, but small-pox was still, what God forbid it should be again, one of the scourges of the human race. This scourge met Lady Catherine face to face, waiting in her youth, bloom, and happiness for her lover, whom she was persuaded—not in audacity and arrogance, but in sheer inexperience—Heaven must spare. The small-pox spared her life and sight, but took everything besides, save what belonged to that immortal part of her which neither plague nor pestilence could reach; the

small-pox branded her as St. Dunstan is said to have seared with hot irons the face of the Saxon maiden, Elgitha, before setting her free to risk an encounter with her royal lover.

At twenty-one, Lady Catherine Fortescue was a bodily wreck, sickly, emaciated, her exquisite complexion irretrievably ruined, her delicate features coarsely blurred, her fine eyes heavy and dim; at her age, in her circumstances, belonging to a class and to a stage of civilization in which personal advantages were very potent, the sentence of reverse was frightful.

Lady Catherine rose so far to meet it. The first time she was able, her trembling hand caught up her gold pen. She had often twirled it happily in her white fingers, considering what pretty, bashfully restrained, but transparently-loving phrases she should use to her ardent lover, whose effusions, however debateable in grammar and orthography, never failed in passionate recollections of her beauty, and anticipations of its perfection, with fervent vows of allegiance to the balsam cheek, the dove-grey eyes, the rosebud of a mouth, the soft warm cloud of brown hair—all of which had suffered eclipse and transformation to the drawn purple lips, and the thinned locks.

Now Lady Catherine wrote straight to the point:—

"I have had the small-pox, to my great grief, for your sake, as well as for my own, since, though I have recovered, I am quite altered—I doubt, even, if you would know me again. At least, you would never more call me your little beauty. I have become a very plain girl. My mirror told me so whenever I was allowed to look into it, and my friends could not deny the evidence. In addition, I fear my health is shattered, I continue to be so weak and to have so many ailments. I know you are sorry for me, as I am sorry for you in your disappointment, but as neither you nor I could have anticipated the melancholy end to our plans, I do not think it is right—believe me, I recoil from binding you to a marred lot that God, who sent it to me, will give me strength to bear alone. But at your age, in our rank, with its obligations, to persist in tying yourself to a disfigured, dull, and fretful invalid (for I am all that, Lord Robert), would not only be very foolish, it would be unsuitable and injurious. Don't let your generosity mislead you. Take back your word, and I shall take back mine. I shall never blame you, even in thought. I shall always take the deepest interest in your welfare, and perhaps one day we may meet as friends. I am not fit to write more, except that I pray God to bless you, now and ever.

"CATHERINE FORTESCUE."

If there is anything hard, stiff, and unnatural in this letter, remember that it was written by a creature not only stricken, but gagged. Lord Robert realised that, when he replied in gallant indignation—not resentment—that no change in his Lady Catherine could make any change in him. He should only hold her dearer for what the world and she might

err and esteem her loss. He would not restore her her word, though she restored him his twenty times. Had such a proposal come from a man, though he had been Lord Robert's commander-in-chief, Lord Robert would have considered it so heavy a reflection on him as a man and gentleman that he would have had the proposer "out" before the day was done, risking a court-martial. But to stop Lady Catherine's dear mouth, he would move heaven and earth to get leave, or he would be tempted to take French leave and share the fate of Sir Home Popham and his squadron. He would marry her out of hand, and have her off with him to recruit in a mild climate, at Lisbon, or nearer the forces, where many English ladies ventured to take up their abode and make English colonies, to be within reach of their husbands.

Poor young Lady Catherine in her twenty-second year was comforted a little by that warm, swaggering letter which she read, till it was so wasted by severe wear and tear that she had to encase it in two tiny boards, bound with blue ribbon, in order that it might be preserved to be buried with her. (Was it buried with her, after all?) But in the meantime she began to look up faintly, to have some heart in her recovery, some hope in her life. There was reviving trust, struggling successfully with despair in her pathetic question to her faithful Sally.

"Do you think Lord Robert will be able to bear the sight of me, Sally? He cared so much for my looks; men put so much weight on looks. They were all that he had time or perhaps inclination to see in me. But if he never thought of Oxham, and you know he was too noble and true to do that, don't you think it is just possible that he may not heed my looks, and care only for me—that part of me which is left to love him so?"

Lady Stukely was pleased, though she was also dubious and nervous. Then Lord Robert sent a courier express to announce that he had got leave, he would sail in a few days, and if his packet were not caught by the enemy, he would be in England at the heels of his messenger before February was ended. But as he must be out in Spain again early in April, he urged that every preparation should be made beforehand, and his bride ready to marry on a moment's warning, and start like a soldier's wife with her husband on his campaigning.

Lady Stukely and Lady Catherine were gone with the first breath of spring to Tunbridge Wells to try what the waters would do to retrieve the desolation of disease, as people had recourse then to mineral wells for all trivial and all fatal complaints of the most widely varied type—vapours, consumption, gout, atrophy, crediting the waters with miraculous power which only an angel troubling them could have conferred. Tunbridge Wells out of season was as good a locality as another for the celebration of a marriage, which, even without regard to its history, was to be consummated quietly and speedily in the temporary reaction of fashion from the splendid coach-and-six, twelve best men and twelve best maids, troops of friends and heaps of livery of the Grandisonian era. But Tunbridge

Wells in spring,—before primroses were thick as daisies on every grassy bank, blue-bells gemming each dingle, cuckoos calling in the Penshurst and the Erridge woods,—was another place from Tunbridge in the bounty of autumn. It was bare as its hop poles, and bleak as its common.

Yet marriage was never so abridged of joyous honour and festivity, or even so clogged with drawbacks, the scene of it was never so ungenial as to prevent its being the one marriage in the world to its own particular bride. Let it be ever so shorn and spoiled, it will serve to occupy and interest her in its details for days and weeks beforehand. This peculiarly feminine fascination was a boon to Lady Catherine, above all at the date when Lord Robert announced himself as near as Dover, where he was to sleep and recruit from a stormy voyage, purposing to post to Tunbridge Wells so as to reach it two days before the wedding-day, and one day before their graces of Salop, and sundry lords and ladies Luttrel, travelling in their family coach, arrived for the same happy event.

Lady Catherine was fain to tax to the uttermost her slight strength, with the arrangement of pelisses and morning gowns, wraps, mails, the procuring of the special license, the reading of the marriage settlement, the bridal chariot, the hotels where it was to stop, the accommodation for Sally Judd, (how Lady Catherine clung to Sally) and Lord Robert's man in the rumble, the letters which were to be written to Lady Stukely from ship-board, and in the moment of landing in a foreign city,—all to escape the thought of the imminent meeting which had been imagined in every way except the one way in which it came about, and longed for till the longing died out in sick reluctance.

By a species of instinct and unspoken sense of fitness, such as belongs to a sensitive temperament, Lady Catherine had dressed herself for the occasion in a costume as far removed as possible from that of the soft white crape and shining white satin hat with its nodding feather in which she had danced before Lord Robert at his first ball. The cold spring winds and her feeble health, together with the hour just after noon, afforded excuse for the poor young woman's shrouding her defects in what was then called a great coat of dark bottle-green cloth, trimmed with black fur, to which belonged a plaited frill tied by a neckerchief up to her ears, and a round cap drawn down to her nose. In this guise Lady Catherine looked like a living mummy when she rose cold and trembling at the sound of carriage wheels dashing up and stopping at the door. Lady Catherine had proffered an irresistible request to her grandmother that the interview with her bridegroom should be private. Thus alone and unsupported—not hurrying with flying feet and panting breath, but standing nailed to the floor of the artificial, flimsy, lodging-house drawing-room, Lady Catherine heard again with sharpened, strained sense, after all that had come and gone, his voice with its mellowness roughened by anxiety and eagerness, his step spurning the space between them, resounding and drawing nearer, till he burst into the room—a man in the

to the dress of a young lady in Lady Catherine's position, constituted the fairy princess who was starting to meet the prince. The hat and feather took nothing from the youthfulness of the aspirant, while it added to that youthfulness an indescribable element of maidenly dignity and stateliness perfectly compatible with modesty and sprightliness.

Lady Catherine looked at herself with innocent complacency, and in her trepidation arranged a fold here and a knot there, beat time with eager foot to imaginary dance airs, drew on her gloves to try and beguile the interval which must elapse before Lady Stukely, who had been anxiously overlooking her grand-daughter's toilette, should have completed her own. Lady Catherine had pledged herself to sit as steady as a rock, not rise and run about and plume herself like a restless bird disranging its fine feathers in the pluming. But the restlessness was getting the better of her, and even healthy young Lady Catherine was in danger of becoming nervous over her *debût*. Her fleeting glances out of the window were fixed by an arrival at the hotel opposite, and she seized on the diversion.

"Sally, what is going on? what do you see there?" Lady Catherine called to her elderly maid, who, now that she had discharged the most onerous functions that her office was ever likely to bring her, unless it should be on Lady Catherine's wedding morning, had retired to a seat at the window and methodically resumed her work, only intermitting it to keep a watchful, admiring eye on her young mistress. This Sally, with regard to whom Lady Catherine did not fall into the hard unfeminine habit, just coming into practice, of dropping the Christian name and employing merely the surname, was a link between the picturesque Abigails of Pope's "Betty" type and the commonplace or tawdry *soubrettes* represented by "Jenkins," or "Dawson," "Dupont," or "Schmidt." Sally Judd was not a *dame de compagnie* as imperious, whimsical and saucy as her mistress, neither was she an enterprising hairdresser's or milliner's assistant, whose merit lay in her fingers, or, at farthest, in her eyes. Sally could not only say her church catechism and the responses in her prayer-book by heart, read and write and cast up accounts, she could bake and brew, distil scents and medicine, besides being an adept at plain sewing. She had some experience of real human life; she was trustworthy and sensible; though not a *dame de compagnie*, she was a companionable woman.

Sally, sitting in her good, sober gown, white apron and cap, sewing busily, responded to her mistress's appeal.

"There is a travelling chariot just entering the inn yard, Lady Catherine, and a party of five officers alighting."

"Oh, dear, how late they will be," Lady Catherine clasped her hands and regretted, disinterestedly; "they will miss the opening by the Master and her Grace and all the earlier sets."

"But you will not miss 'em, my lady." Sally comforted her mistress with a short, half-bashful compliment.

"Who, I? I daresay I shall not notice the naughty men who come late. I shall have more to do."

Lady Catherine pretended to give herself airs, laughing joyously at the pretence. But Lady Catherine did notice these late-comers in spite of everything—her own triumphant success, among other impediments, —partly because the strangers were worthy of notice, partly because there is a fate and a Providence in men and women's destinies.

Lady Stukely joined Lady Catherine, as desirable a chaperon as could be made by wisdom, reputation, the hoary crown of a high head, the splendour of the brocade, lace, and jewels,—above all the finish of the manners of the old régime, and individually by the innate truth and tenderness of a staunch old spirit, which no long apprenticeship to worldly ways could render more than superficially worldly.

The ladies walked as the evening was fine, and in the lingering inadvertent homeliness of the artificial world on this side of the Channel, which capped the mock simplicity maintained by a violent effort on the revolutionized shores of France. Lady Stukely and her grand-daughter were attended by a couple of men-servants, to prevent their being too pressingly waited on by a crowd of respectable admirers among the townspeople, whom such a spectacle entranced "mightily," to the doors of the Assembly Rooms. Later in the evening, the same townspeople would not think it beneath their dignity to get up, on the Pantiles without, rival country-dances to those of the nobility and gentry within, jigged blithely to the music, floating through the open windows, of the one instrumental band. Was it not a social world, though it was also a world of extravagance, excess, sometimes of vile debauchery, on which the setting sun shone between fifty and sixty years ago?

The due buzz of admiration had been given on Lady Catherine's entrance, the due throng of solicitations for the honour of an introduction, and the felicity of being her partner, had followed. Other stars of the season—the beautiful Miss Heathcotes, understood to be penniless adventuresses, but so much the rage, and so likely to wed, in unwary moments, enamoured dukes, or earls at least, that rash squires could not refrain from singeing their wings, Miss Larkins, the great city heiress, for when were city heiresses not in the field? and they were more conspicuous, more marked by mammon ugliness in a former than in the present generation — subsided discreetly, or with a little unavailing angry twinkle giving way to the unmistakeable rising sun.

Lady Stukely, after taking care to do a little severe weeding to the candidates for her grand-daughter's notice, saw her present task in a manner happily ended, and her goal attained. She delegated its slight remaining duties to qualified allies, and in consideration of her own years and honourable labours, allowed herself to be seated at the principal card table. There Lady Stukely arranged her cards like a high-bred connoisseur in card playing, who had played at the loo table of the late Princess Emily, and was elegant rather than offensive in taking snuff after

gaining a secure footing on the mainland, sailed for Formosa and announced his intention of establishing a kingdom for himself on that island. The Dutch resisted his landing, but ineffectually; and, in 1661, they were driven out by the invader. In the course of the following year an expedition was sent out from Holland to recover the lost colony, but "the floating castles" were ignominiously defeated by the junks of the pirate, who died king of Formosa. His son and successor, however, failed to keep what his father had won; and, in 1683, the island finally fell again under Chinese rule. Although occupying an area nearly as large as that of Denmark, Formosa is reckoned only as a Prefecture, and is placed under the jurisdiction of the Viceroy of Fuh-keen. The "Great Bay," as the name Taiwan—given by the Chinese to the island from its shape—signifies, has always been a thorn in the side to the vice-regal Government. Though nominally under Chinese jurisdiction from north to south and from east to west, the mountain districts are still held by the native tribes, who administer their own laws, and who refuse to acknowledge fealty to the Tartar race. On the level country the Chinese emigrants have established themselves; the deputies of the Viceroy hold sway, but the limits of their jurisdiction are perfectly well understood, and are clearly defined, for the most part, by some natural boundary, such as a stream or a range of hills. Across this no Chinaman dare venture, unless he be provided with a pass from the neighbouring native chieftain; and the mountaineers, having a wholesome dread of the encroaching tendencies of the colonists, seldom encourage them to cross the border. Roughly speaking, it may be said that the range of mountains which runs from north to south, dividing the island into two parts, forms the boundary between the possessions of the native tribes and of the Chinese Government; the latter holding sovereignty over the plains which stretch from the mountains westward to the sea, and the former maintaining their positions in the wild mountain tracts which separate the backbone of the island from the rocky shore of the eastern coast.

From the days of Candidius and David Wright, in the seventeenth century, down to the present time, few foreigners have voluntarily visited the mountain fastnesses of the Formosan aborigines. The inducements to do so are very small, and the danger of venturing among them is considerable. Of trade there is none, and the jealousy with which they view the presence of foreigners serves to surround a sojourn among them with a considerable amount of risk. Who they are and whence they came is a disputed point; but it is plain that there is no affinity of race between them and the Chinese. Their features are more prominent, and they resemble much more nearly the Malays than their Tartar neighbours. Similarities have also been discovered between the dialects spoken among them and those employed in the Malay Peninsula. The probability is, therefore, that they are, equally with the Lolos of Burmah and the Miau-tsze of China, an offshoot from the Malay stock. At the present time they are divided into several tribes, each speaking a dialect of its own,

and each maintaining a separate political system. They are almost absolute strangers to reading and writing, and the only manuscripts which they are known to possess are some scrawling European letters, which are preserved by a tribe professing to be descended from the early Dutch settlers on the island, as an irrefragable proof of the authenticity of the tradition. The religion they profess takes the form of the grossest materialism. They believe that the world is governed by a good and an evil spirit, each of whom is constantly striving for the mastery; and that both are to be propitiated by presents and sacrifice. The priesthood is monopolised by women, who combine fortune-telling with their sacerdotal duties, and who exercise supreme power over their votaries by trading on their superstitious fancies, at the same time that they retain their hold over their affections by encouraging them, in the names of their gods, to give full vent to their passions. These priestesses—or *Inibs*, as they are called—are consulted as oracles when any warlike expedition or undertaking of any magnitude is in contemplation, and a still further token from the gods is looked for in the movements of the bird *Aidak*. If troops meet an *Aidak* with a worm in its mouth, they go forward confident of victory; but should it cross their path, or fly from them, they consider it as a warning not to be disregarded, and they accordingly return every man to his dwelling.

Like the Miau-tsze, the Formosans delight in open-air feasts and merry-makings, and, during the nine great festivals of the year, all work is suspended and the people one and all sit down to dance and to play—and, it must be added, to drink. As the feasting proceeds the meetings become, especially at the Venus fêtes, scenes of the lowest debaucheries; all decency is laid aside, and the people, led by their priestesses, give themselves up to every form of sensual enjoyment. The marriage tie is as loosely made as it is easily dissolved. The young swain, who, by an unwritten law, must have arrived at the age of twenty-one, having made a choice of a lady-love, serenades her; and she, if she favours his suit, allows herself to be enticed by his music into his company. He then sends certain presents, varying in value according to the resources at his command, to the lady's parents, a day is fixed for the wedding, and the happy pair—having poured out libations to Heaven and Earth—become man and wife. But, by a curious perversion of the laws of nature, from the day of his marriage until he reaches the age of forty the husband is not permitted openly to enjoy the society of his wife. Only by stealth and at night is he allowed to visit her, at her father's house; and daylight is the signal for his departure. During this or any future time the merest quarrel, however slight, is frequently made the excuse for a divorce; and, if it should be proved that the wife is the provoking cause of the dispute, the husband has a right to claim from her parents the presents he gave them at his betrothal. This licence of divorce is freely used, and it often happens that a man marries and divorces several wives in a single year. The evils arising from this free-and-easy state of things are somewhat

"Im—possible; engaged three, six, nine deep. Old dragon of a grandmother, Lady Stukely, inspected and fixed the engagements."

"Then I shan't dance with any other lady," threatened Lord Robert, in a pet, preparing to loll sulkily against the wall.

In the first glow of his herodom, and of the satellites' hero-worship, to thwart and vex Lord Robert as if he were an ordinary mortal was not to be thought of. The Duke of Salop's son—this son the fighter of his country's battles, the conquering hero, or at least the hero who would conquer in the end—deserved better at the hands of his grateful admirers. One obliging fellow flew to the master of the ceremonies to make known to him the dilemma; another, an elderly enthusiast, a friend of Lady Stukely's, apprized her of the laurels which she and Lady Catherine were in danger of losing, and whispered to the guardian and grandmother that Lord Robert, though a younger son, inherited a good estate in Sussex from his maternal grandfather; a third, the shrewdest helper of all, observed that one of Lady Catherine's promised partners had forgotten himself and her, and was incapable of profiting by his good fortune (a casualty not unheard-of in those days), having in the meantime indulged in such rash potations in the refreshment-room that he had been carried senseless from the field to his lodgings, along with other vanquished men overtaken by the same evil hap. What so easy as for Lord Robert, by these combined forces, to step into the vacant shoes of his unconscious predecessor *hors de combat?*

Lord Robert danced with Lady Catherine, certainly without shirking a couple of the two overflowing sets. Then he stood beside her looking at her, leaning over her, talking to her, till all the other couples had danced loyally and exultingly after the couple of the night. In the advantage of establishing innocent familiarity in the matter of rational acquaintance, these old-fashioned country-dances were, in comparison with modern dances, what stage-coach was to railway travelling. In evidence, recall how Henry Tilney had opportunity to play with and fall in love with the tastes of Catherine Morland, and how Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet even discussed and disputed principles, all between the "cross hands and down the middle and up again."

Next, by another stroke of a benign destiny, that dance concluded just as the signal was given for supper, and Lord Robert had the supreme happiness of escorting Lady Catherine to the supper-room, of serving her with chicken and claret cup, and of convincing himself, more and more to his own undoing and enslavement, how perfect his companion was in more than her young beauty or her gifts of fortune. How unaffected, how ingenuous, what a good listener he found her! She did not compel him to rack his brains and go back to last year's topics—what she thought of Catalani's singing and Young's playing, for the great Yorkshire election and Sir Francis Burdett's triumphal car, would not have been much in a young lady's way. He might have stumbled on the Duchess of Brunswick's arrival in the country, and what effect the event might

have on the differences in a certain royal household. All women, young and old, were interested in a man and wife's quarrels. But he was saved the trouble. Lady Catherine was prepared to hang breathless on his stories of transports, disembarkations, marches, and bivouacs among cork trees and vineyards; above all, of a pitched battle. She put quick, intelligent questions in the sweetest of voices, laughed melodiously, turned away her Rubens' or Reynolds' head in its hat and feather, to hide the tender moisture which dimmed her bright eyes, when he knew his own were wet, as he entered into the tragic spirit of some of his narratives, and talked with a little faltering in his simple eloquence.

Lady Catherine came back from her first ball with a head as nearly turned and a heart as nearly lost as ever Lady Catherine's or young beauty's head and heart were in danger of capitulation on the first summons. Why, Lady Stukely had not been proof against the spell! Her own old head and heart were not quite in her keeping after all she had greedily swallowed of "the handsomest, best-matched young couple that eyes were ever set on;" of "the old fascinating romance in love at first sight warming the heart;" of "Dan Cupid's being worth all the heralds and gentlemen-ushers in the world, at the same time when they and Dan shook hands and walked in good-fellowship, it was a sight for an admiring universe—a sight almost more than this great human quality-world could stand without dying of envy;" of "none but the brave deserving the fair, from the days of Alexander downwards." But Lady Stukely was old, and a little worn out with all this success and unexpected excitement. She retired to rest so soon as she had reached her lodging.

Lady Catherine, too young to feel fatigue, to entertain a doubt, all palpitating with emotion—very naturally, but very suddenly and swiftly, awakened, could not go to bed and to sleep immediately, and wanted to talk over her adventures, to recount what she could of her impressions. In her brotherless, sisterless state she had none to talk to but Sally Judd, and so to Sally, considerably overcome with sleep, yet with patience and interest to spare, as she unfastened Lady Catherine's dress and brushed her hair, Lady Catherine sat and prattled about the ball. And Sally was sharp enough to remark how perpetually the name of Lord Robert Luttrel—"the gallant young soldier from the Peninsula, you know, Sally"—slipped out, late as had been Lord Robert's attendance at the rooms, how his figure superseded and overshadowed other figures, how Lady Catherine's cheeks and eyes burned and glowed as she mentioned him.

Sally said to herself, in her plain way, "The business is done. My mistress has met her master if so be he choose to be the happiest and one of the powerfullest gentlemen in England. It's like he'll consent, for Lady Catherine and Oxham are not gifts to be cast away. Shouldn't I like to get a look at him! but that will come in good time."

Even after Sally had been dismissed, Lady Catherine could not come down from her giddy height of happiness, but flitted about in her white dressing-gown with her twinkling bare feet, reproaching herself for

not settling to say her prayers, peeping out at the stars, opening the window an inch for a little air. It was at that moment when, retreating hastily from the sound of the last feet of the ball-goers on the Pantiles below, that Lady Catherine detected a quick step, which all at once lingered. At the same time she distinguished a well-remembered voice that had thrilled her not two hours before, in the pauses of the interminable dance, and amidst the clatter of forks and knives and tongues in the supper-room. The voice said now (could she forgive its loud openness and vehement assertion?), "Is this where she lives? By George! I shall never rest till I have secured her for my wife."

CHAPTER II.

Another Meeting.

Very little more was called for in order that Lord Robert might fulfil his pledge. A few promenades on the Pantiles, the Assemblies, a morning service at church, a bewitching gipsey tea among the frowning, yawning, tangled beauties of the High Rocks, a delightful dreamy ride through oak and birch coppice, and high green hollies to the ruins at Bayham, were all the occasions on which Lady Catherine and Lord Robert saw each other, before the two promised to become one, and to be true to each other for life and death.

Lord Robert rejoined the army; Lady Catherine was presented at Court, where she was rallied by royal lips on her interest in the war, and went through her first season. Four or five years of lovers' separation followed. Then, like a thunder-clap in a summer sky, unclouded as it had seemed the moment before, the blow fell—so simple a blow, yet so grievous and manifold in its consequences, a trial so difficult to realize in our days of merciful modifications and compensations.

Fifty or sixty years since sounds so short a time for us to go back and regard with wonder and pity troubles which hardly come near the present generation, working on natures which were not trained as ours have been. Yet not more than sixty years ago the entire colony of New South Wales was in danger of perishing from a single sailing vessel's not arriving in time to supply the colonists with a fresh store of provision to replace their last ounces of musty flour and salt pork.

Jenner had lived to receive a vote of thirty thousand pounds from Parliament ere this, but small-pox was still, what God forbid it should be again, one of the scourges of the human race. This scourge met Lady Catherine face to face, waiting in her youth, bloom, and happiness for her lover, whom she was persuaded—not in audacity and arrogance, but in sheer inexperience—Heaven must spare. The small-pox spared her life and sight, but took everything besides, save what belonged to that immortal part of her which neither plague nor pestilence could reach; the

small-pox branded her as St. Dunstan is said to have seared with hot irons the face of the Saxon maiden, Elgitha, before setting her free to risk an encounter with her royal lover.

At twenty-one, Lady Catherine Fortescue was a bodily wreck, sickly, emaciated, her exquisite complexion irretrievably ruined, her delicate features coarsely blurred, her fine eyes heavy and dim; at her age, in her circumstances, belonging to a class and to a stage of civilization in which personal advantages were very potent, the sentence of reverse was frightful.

Lady Catherine rose so far to meet it. The first time she was able, her trembling hand caught up her gold pen. She had often twirled it happily in her white fingers, considering what pretty, bashfully restrained, but transparently-loving phrases she should use to her ardent lover, whose effusions, however debateable in grammar and orthography, never failed in passionate recollections of her beauty, and anticipations of its perfection, with fervent vows of allegiance to the balsam cheek, the dove-grey eyes, the rosebud of a mouth, the soft warm cloud of brown hair—all of which had suffered eclipse and transformation to the drawn purple lips, and the thinned locks.

Now Lady Catherine wrote straight to the point:—

"I have had the small-pox, to my great grief, for your sake, as well as for my own, since, though I have recovered, I am quite altered—I doubt, even, if you would know me again. At least, you would never more call me your little beauty. I have become a very plain girl. My mirror told me so whenever I was allowed to look into it, and my friends could not deny the evidence. In addition, I fear my health is shattered, I continue to be so weak and to have so many ailments. I know you are sorry for me, as I am sorry for you in your disappointment, but as neither you nor I could have anticipated the melancholy end to our plans, I do not think it is right—believe me, I recoil from binding you to a marred lot that God, who sent it to me, will give me strength to bear alone. But at your age, in our rank, with its obligations, to persist in tying yourself to a disfigured, dull, and fretful invalid (for I am all that, Lord Robert), would not only be very foolish, it would be unsuitable and injurious. Don't let your generosity mislead you. Take back your word, and I shall take back mine. I shall never blame you, even in thought. I shall always take the deepest interest in your welfare, and perhaps one day we may meet as friends. I am not fit to write more, except that I pray God to bless you, now and ever.

"CATHERINE FORTESCUE."

If there is anything hard, stiff, and unnatural in this letter, remember that it was written by a creature not only stricken, but gagged. Lord Robert realised that, when he replied in gallant indignation—not resentment—that no change in his Lady Catherine could make any change in him. He should only hold her dearer for what the world and she might

seemed to be approaching steadily. One temporary gleam of good fortune cheered him for a time. He persuaded an enterprising publisher to bring out a poem called "The Candidate," which had some faint success, though ridiculed by the reviewers. Unluckily the publisher became bankrupt and Crabbe was thrown upon his resources—the poor three pounds and box of surgical instruments aforesaid. How he managed to hold out for a year is a mystery. It was lucky for him, as he intimates, that he had never heard of the fate of Chatterton, who had poisoned himself just ten years before. A Journal which he wrote for Mira is published in his Life, and gives an account of his feelings during three months of his cruel probation. He applies for a situation as amanuensis offered in an advertisement, and comforts himself on failing with the reflection that the advertiser was probably a sharper. He writes piteous letters to publishers and gets, of course, the stereotyped reply with which the most amiable of publishers must damp the ardour of aspiring genius. The disappointment is not much softened by the publisher's statement that "he does not mean by this to insinuate any want of merit in the poem, but rather a want of attention in the public." Bit by bit his surgical instruments go to the pawnbroker. When one publisher sends his polite refusal poor Crabbe has only sixpence-farthing in the world, which, by the purchase of a pint of porter, is reduced to fourpence-halfpenny. The exchequer fills again by the disappearance of his wardrobe and his watch; but ebbs under a new temptation. He buys some odd volumes of Dryden for three-and-sixpence, and on coming home tears his only coat, which he manages to patch tolerably with a borrowed needle and thread, pretending, with a pathetic shift, that they are required to stitch together manuscripts instead of broadcloth. And so for a year the wolf creeps nearer to the door, whilst Crabbe gallantly keeps up appearances and spirits. And yet he tries to preserve a show of good spirits in the Journal to Mira, and continues to labour at his versemaking. Perhaps, indeed, it may be regarded as a bad symptom that he is reduced to distracting his mind by making an analysis of a dull sermon. "There is nothing particular in it," he admits, but at least it is better, he thinks, to listen to a bad sermon than to the blasphemous rant of deistical societies. Indeed, Crabbe's spirit was totally unlike the desperate pride of Chatterton. He was of the patient enduring tribe, and comforts himself by religious meditations, which are, perhaps, rather commonplace in expression, but when read by the light of the distresses he was enduring, show a brave and unembittered spirit, not to be easily respected too highly. Starvation seemed to be approaching; or, at least, the only alternative was the abandonment of his ambition, and acceptance, if he could get it, of the post of druggist's assistant. He had but one resource left; and that not of the most promising kind. Crabbe, amongst his other old-fashioned notions, had a strong belief in the traditional patron. Johnson might have given him some hints upon the subject; but luckily, as it turned out, he pursued what Chesterfield's correspondent would have thought the most

hopeless of all courses. He wrote to Lord North, who was at that moment occupied in contemplating the final results of the ingenious policy by which America was lost to England, and probably consigned Crabbe's letter to the waste-paper basket. Then he tried the effect of a copy of verses, beginning—

> Ah! Shelburne, blest with all that's good or great,
> T' adorn a rich or save a sinking State.

He added a letter saying that as Lord North had not answered him, Lord Shelburne would probably be glad to supply the needs of a starving apothecary turned poet. Another copy of verses was enclosed, pointing out that Shelburne's reputed liberality would be repaid in the usual coin:

> Then shall my grateful strains his ear rejoice,
> His name harmonious thrill'd on Mira's voice;
> Round the reviving bays new sweets shall spring,
> And Shelburne's fame through laughing valleys ring!

Nobody can blame North and Shelburne for not acting the part of good Samaritans. He, at least, may throw the first stone who has always taken the trouble to sift the grain from the chaff amidst all the begging letters which he has received, and who has never lamented that his benevolence outran his discretion. But there was one man in England at the time who had the rare union of qualities necessary for Crabbe's purpose. Burke is a name never to be mentioned without reverence; not only because Burke was incomparably the greatest of all English political writers, and a standing refutation of the theory which couples rhetorical excellence with intellectual emptiness, but also because he was a man whose glowing hatred of all injustice and sympathy for all suffering never evaporated in empty words. His fine literary perception enabled him to detect the genuine excellence which underlay the superficial triviality of Crabbe's verses. He discovered the genius where men like North and Shelburne might excusably see nothing but the mendicant versifier; and a benevolence still rarer than his critical ability forbade him to satisfy his conscience by the sacrifice of a five-pound note. When, by the one happy thought of his life, Crabbe appealed to Burke's sympathy, the poet was desperately endeavouring to get a poem through the press. But he owed fourteen pounds, and every application to friends as poor as himself, and to patrons upon whom he had no claims, had been unsuccessful. Nothing but ruin was before him. After writing to Burke he spent the night in pacing Westminster Bridge. The letter on which his fate hung is the more pathetic because it is free from those questionable poetical flourishes which had failed to conciliate his former patrons. It tells his story frankly and forcibly. Burke, however, was not a rich man, and was at one of the most exciting periods of his political career. His party was at last fighting its way to power by means of the general resentment against the gross mismanagement of their antagonists. A perfunctory discharge of the duty of charity would have been pardonable;

but from the moment when Crabbe addressed Burke the poor man's fortune was made. Burke's glory rests upon services of much more importance to the world at large than even the preservation to the country of a man of genuine power. Yet there are few actions on which he could reflect with more unalloyed satisfaction; and the case is not a solitary one in Burke's history. A political triumph may often be only hastened a year or two by the efforts of even a great leader; but the salvage of a genius which would otherwise have been hopelessly wrecked in the deep waters of poverty is so much clear gain to mankind. One circumstance may be added as oddly characteristic of Crabbe. He always spoke of his benefactor with becoming gratitude; and many years afterwards Moore and Rogers thought that they might extract some interesting anecdotes of the great author from the now celebrated poet. Burke, as we know, was a man whom you would discover to be remarkable if you stood with him for five minutes under a haystack in a shower. Crabbe stayed in his house for months under circumstances most calculated to be impressive. Burke was at the height of his power and reputation; he was the first man of any distinction whom the poet had ever seen; the two men had long and intimate conversations, and Crabbe, it may be added, was a very keen observer of character. And yet all that Rogers and Moore could extract from him was a few "vague generalities." Moore suggests some explanation; but the fact seems to be that Crabbe was one of those simple, homespun characters whose interests were strictly limited to his own peculiar sphere. Burke, when he pleased, could talk of oxen as well as of politics, and doubtless adapted his conversation to the taste of the young poet. Probably, much more was said about the state of Burke's farm than about the prospects of the Whig party. Crabbe's powers of vision were as limited as they were keen, and the great qualities to which Burke owed his reputation could only exhibit themselves in a sphere to which Crabbe never rose. His attempt to draw a likeness of Burke under the name of "Eugenius," in the "Borough," is open to the objection that it would be nearly as applicable to Wilberforce, Howard, or Dr. Johnson. It is a mere complimentary daub, in which every remarkable feature of the original is blurred or altogether omitted.

The inward Crabbe remained to the end of his days what nature and education had already made him; the outward Crabbe, by the help of Burke, rapidly put on a more prosperous appearance. His poems were published and achieved success. He took orders and found patrons. Thurlow gave him 100*l.*, and afterwards presented him to two small livings, growling out with an oath that he was "as like parson Adams as twelve to a dozen." The Duke of Rutland appointed him chaplain, a position in which he seems to have been singularly out of his element. Further patronage, however, made him independent, and he married his Mira and lived very happily ever afterwards. Perhaps, with his old-fashioned ideas, he would not quite have satisfied some clerical critics of

the present day. His views about non-residence and pluralities seem to have been lax for a time; and his hearty dislike for dissent was coupled with a general dislike for enthusiasm of all kinds. He liked to ramble about after flowers and fossils, and to hammer away at his poems in a study where chaos reigned supreme. For twenty-two years after his first success as an author, he never managed to get a poem into a state fit for publication, though periodical conflagrations of masses of manuscript—too vast to be burnt in the chimney—testified to his continuous industry. His reappearance seems to have been caused chiefly by his desire to send a son to the University. His success was repeated, though a new school had arisen which knew not Pope. The youth who had been kindly received by Burke, Reynolds, and Johnson, came back from his country retreat to be lionized at Holland House, and be petted by Brougham and Moore, and Rogers, and Campbell, and all the rising luminaries. He paid a visit to Scott contemporaneously with George IV., and pottered about the queer old wynds and closes of Edinburgh, which he preferred to the New Town, and apparently to Arthur's Seat, with a judicious *caddie* following to keep him out of mischief. A more tangible kind of homage was the receipt of 3,000*l.* from Murray for his *Tales of the Hall*, which so delighted him that he insisted on carrying the bills loose in his pocket till he could show them "to his son John" in the country. There, no doubt, he was most at home; and his parishioners gradually became attached to their "parson Adams," in spite of his quaintnesses and some manful defiance of their prejudices. All women and children loved him, and he died at a good old age in 1832, having lived into a new order in many things, and been as little affected by the change as most men. The words with which he concludes the sketch of the Vicar in his "Borough" are not inappropriate to himself:—

> Nor one so old has left this world of sin
> More like the being that he entered in.

The peculiar homeliness of Crabbe's character and poetry is excellently hit off in the *Rejected Addresses*, and the lines beginning

> John Richard William Alexander Dwyer
> Was footman to Justinian Stubbs, Esquire,

are probably more familiar to the present generation than any of the originals. "Pope in worsted stockings" is the title hit off for him by Horace Smith, and has about the same degree of truth as most smart sayings of the kind. The "worsted stockings" at least are characteristic. Crabbe's son and biographer indicates some of the surroundings of his father's early life in a description of the uncle, a Mr. Tovell, with whom the poet's wife, the Mira of his Journal, passed her youth. He was a sturdy yeoman, living in an old house with a moat, a rookery, and fishponds. The hall was paved with black and white marble, and the staircase was of black oak, slippery as ice, with a chiming clock and a barrel-organ on the landing-places. The handsome drawing-room and

dining rooms were only used on grand occasions, such as the visit of a neighbouring peer. Mrs. Tovell jealously reserved for herself the duty of scrubbing these state apartments, and sent any servant to the right-about who dared to lay unhallowed hands upon them. The family sat habitually in the old-fashioned kitchen, by a huge open chimney, where the blaze of a whole pollard sometimes eclipsed the feeble glimmer of the single candle in an iron candlestick, intended to illuminate Mrs. Tovell's labours with the needle. Masters and servants, with any travelling tinker or ratcatcher, all dined together, and the nature of their meals has been described by Crabbe himself:

> But when the men beside their station took,
> The maidens with them, and with these the cook;
> When one huge wooden bowl before them stood,
> Fill'd with huge balls of farinaceous food;
> With bacon, mass saline, where never lean
> Beneath the brown and bristly rind was seen;
> When from a single horn the party drew
> Their copious draughts of heavy ale and new;

then, the poet goes on to intimate, squeamish persons might feel a little uncomfortable. After dinner followed a nap of precisely one hour. Then bottles appeared on the table, and neighbouring farmers, with faces rosy with brandy, drifted in for a chat. One of these heroes never went to bed sober, but scandalized all teetotallers by retaining all his powers and coursing after he was ninety. Bowl after bowl of punch was emptied, and the conversation took so convivial a character that Crabbe generally found it expedient to withdraw, though his son, who records these performances, was held to be too young to be injured, and the servants were too familiar for their presence to be a restraint.

It was in this household that the poet found his Mira. Crabbe's own father was apparently at a lower point of the social scale; and during his later years took to drinking and to flinging dishes about the room whenever he was out of temper. Crabbe always drew from the life; most of his characters might have joined in his father's drinking bouts, or told stories over Mr. Tovell's punchbowls. Doubtless a social order of the same kind survived till a later period in various corners of the island. The Tovells of to-day get their fashions from London, and their labourers, instead of dining with them in their kitchen, have taken to forming unions and making speeches about their rights. If, here and there, in some remote nooks we find an approximation to the coarse, hearty, patriarchal mode of life, we regard it as a naturalist regards a puny modern reptile, the representative of gigantic lizards of old geological epochs. A sketch or two of its peculiarities, sufficiently softened and idealized to suit modern tastes, forms a picturesque background to a modern picture. Some of Miss Brontë's rough Yorkshiremen would have drunk punch with Mr. Tovell; and the farmers in the *Mill on the Floss* are representatives of the same race, slightly degenerate, in so far as they are just conscious that a new cause of disturbance is setting into the quiet rural districts.

Dandie Dinmont again is a relation of Crabbe's heroes, though the fresh air of the Cheviots and the stirring traditions of the old border life have conferred upon him a more practical colouring. To get a realistic picture of country life as Crabbe saw it, we must go back to Squire Western, or to some of the roughly-hewn masses of flesh who sat to Hogarth. Perhaps it may be said that Miss Austen's exquisite pictures of the more polished society, which took the waters at Bath, and occasionally paid a visit to London, implies a background of coarser manners and more brutal passions, which lay outside her peculiar province. The question naturally occurs to social philosophers, whether the improvement in the external decencies of life and the wider intellectual horizon of modern days implies a genuine advance over the rude and homely plenty of an earlier generation. I refer to such problems only to remark that Crabbe must be consulted by those who wish to look upon the seamy side of the time which he describes. He very soon dropped his nymphs and shepherds, and ceased to invoke the idyllic muse. In his long portrait gallery there are plenty of virtuous people, and some people intended to be refined; but features indicative of coarse animal passions, brutality, selfishness, and sensuality are drawn to the life, and the development of his stories is generally determined by some of the baser elements of human nature. "Jesse and Colin" are described in one of the Tales; but they are not the Jesse and Colin of Dresden china. They are such rustics as ate fat bacon and drank "heavy ale and new;" not the imaginary personages who exchanged amatory civilities in the old-fashioned pastorals ridiculed by Pope and Gay.

Crabbe's rough style is indicative of his general temper. It is in places at least the most slovenly and slipshod that was ever adopted by any true poet. The authors of the *Rejected Addresses* had simply to copy, without attempting the impossible task of caricaturing. One of their familiar couplets, for example, runs thus:—

> Emmanuel Jennings brought his youngest boy
> Up as a corn-cutter, a safe employ!

And here is the original Crabbe:—

> Swallow, a poor attorney, brought his boy
> Up at his desk, and gave him his employ.

When boy cannot be made to rhyme with employ, Crabbe is very fond of dragging in a hoy. In the *Parish Register* he introduces a narrative about a village grocer and his friend in these lines:—

> Aged were both, that Dawkins, Ditchem this,
> Who much of marriage thought and much amiss.

Or to quote one more opening of a story:—

> Counter and Clubb were men in trade, whose pains,
> Credit, and prudence, brought them constant gains;
> Partners and punctual, every friend agreed
> Counter and Clubb were men who must succeed.

But of such gems anyone may gather as many as he pleases by simply turning over Crabbe's pages. In one sense, they are rather pleasant than otherwise. They are so characteristic and put forward with such absolute simplicity that they have the same effect as a good old provincialism in the mouth of a genuine countryman. It must, however, be admitted that Crabbe's careful study of Pope had not initiated him in some of his master's secrets. The worsted stockings were uncommonly thick. If Pope's brilliance of style savours too much of affectation, Crabbe never manages to hit off an epigram in the whole of his poetry. The language seldom soars above the style which would be intelligible to the merest clodhopper; and we can understand how, when in his later years Crabbe was introduced to wits and men of the world, he generally held his peace, or, at most, let fall some bit of dry quiet humour. At rare intervals he remembers that a poet ought to indulge in a figure of speech, and laboriously compounds a simile which appears in his poetry like a bit of gold lace on a farmer's homespun coat. He confessed as much in answer to a shrewd criticism of Jeffery's, saying that he generally thought of such illustrations and inserted them after he had finished his tale. There is one of these deliberately concocted ornaments, intended to explain the remark that the difference between the character of two brothers came out when they were living together quietly:—

> As various colours in a painted ball,
> While it has rest are seen distinctly all;
> Till, whirl'd around by some exterior force,
> They all are blended in the rapid course;
> So in repose and not by passion swayed
> We saw the difference by their habits made;
> But, tried by strong emotions, they became
> Filled with one love, and were in heart the same.

The conceit is ingenious enough in one sense, but painfully ingenious. It requires some thought to catch the likeness suggested, and then it turns out to be purely superficial. The resemblance of such a writer to Pope obviously does not go deep. Crabbe imitates Pope because everybody imitated him at that day. He adopted Pope's metre because it had come to be almost the only recognised means of poetical expression. He stuck to it after his contemporaries had introduced new versification, partly because he was old-fashioned to the backbone and partly because he had none of those lofty inspirations which naturally generate new forms of melody. He seldom trusts himself to be lyrical, and when he does his versification is nearly as monotonous as in his narrative poetry. We must not expect to soar with Crabbe into any of the loftier regions; to see the world "apparelled in celestial light," or to descry

> Such forms as glitter in the muses' ray,
> With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun.

We shall find no vehement outbursts of passion, breaking loose from the fetters of sacred convention. Crabbe is perfectly content with the British

Constitution, with the Thirty-nine Articles, and all respectabilities in Church and State, and therefore he is quite content also with the good old jogtrot of the recognised metres; his language, halting unusually, and for the most part clumsy enough, is sufficiently differentiated from prose by the mould into which it is run, and he never wants to kick over the traces with his more excitable contemporaries.

> The good old rule
> Sufficeth him, the simple plan

that each verse should consist of ten syllables, with an occasional Alexandrine to accommodate a refractory epithet, and should rhyme peaceably with its neighbour.

From all which it may be too harshly inferred that Crabbe is merely a writer in rhyming prose, and deserving of no attention from the more enlightened adherents of a later school. The inference, I say, would be hasty, for it is impossible to read Crabbe patiently without receiving a very distinct and original impression. If some pedants of æsthetic philosophy should declare that we ought not to be impressed because Crabbe breaks all their rules, we can only reply that they are mistaking their trade. The true business of the critic is to discover from observation what are the conditions under which art appeals to our sympathies, and, if he finds an apparent exception to his rules, to admit that he has made an oversight, and not to condemn the facts which persist in contradicting his theories. It may, indeed, be freely granted that Crabbe has suffered seriously by his slovenly methods and his insensibility to the more exquisite and ethereal forms of poetical excellence. But however he may be classified, he possesses the essential mark of genius, namely, that his pictures, however coarse the workmanship, stamp themselves on our minds indelibly and instantaneously. His pathos is here and there clumsy, but it goes straight to the mark. His characteristic qualities were first distinctly shown in the "Village," which was partly composed under Burke's eye, and was more or less touched by Johnson. It was, indeed, a work after Johnson's own heart, intended to be a pendant, or perhaps a corrective, to Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." It is meant to give the bare blank facts of rural life, stripped of all sentimental gloss. To read the two is something like hearing a speech from an optimist landlord and then listening to the comments of Mr. Arch. Goldsmith, indeed, was far too exquisite an artist to indulge in mere conventionalities about agricultural bliss. If his "Auburn" is rather idealized, the most prosaic of critics cannot object to the glow thrown by the memory of the poet over the scene of now ruined happiness, and, moreover, Goldsmith's delicate humour guards him instinctively from laying on his rose-colour too thickly. Crabbe, however, will have nothing to do with rose-colour, thick or thin. There is one explicit reference in the poem to his predecessor's work, and it is significant. Everybody remembers, or ought to remember, Goldsmith's

charming pastor, to whom it can only be objected that he has not the fear of political economists before his eyes. This is Crabbe's retort, after describing a dying pauper in need of spiritual consolation :—

> And does not he, the pious man, appear,
> He, "passing rich with forty pounds a year?"
> Ah! no; a shepherd of a different stock,
> And far unlike him, feeds this little flock:
> A jovial youth, who thinks his Sunday's task
> As much as God or man can fairly ask;
> The rest he gives to loves and labours light,
> To fields the morning, and to feasts the night.
> None better skilled the noisy pack to guide,
> To urge their chase, to cheer them, or to chide;
> A sportsman keen, he shoots through half the day,
> And, skilled at whist, devotes the night to play.

This fox-hunting parson (of whom Cowper has described a duplicate) lets the pauper die as he pleases; and afterwards allows him to be buried without attending, performing the funerals, it seems, in a lump upon Sundays. Crabbe admits in a note that such negligence was uncommon, but adds that it is not unknown. The flock is, on the whole, worthy of the shepherd. The old village sports have died out in favour of smuggling and wrecking. The poor are not, as rich men fancy, healthy and well fed. Their work makes them premature victims to ague and rheumatism; their food is

> Homely, not wholesome, plain, not plenteous, such
> As you who praise would never deign to touch.

The ultimate fate of the worn-out labourer is the poorhouse, described in lines, of which it is enough to say that Scott and Wordsworth learnt them by heart, and the melancholy death-bed already noticed. Are we reading a poem or a Blue Book done into rhyme? may possibly be the question of some readers. The answer should perhaps be that a good many Blue Books contain an essence which only requires to be properly extracted and refined to become genuine poetry. If Crabbe's verses retain rather too much of the earthly elements, he is capable of transmuting his minerals into genuine gold, as well as of simply collecting them. Nothing, for example, is more characteristic than the mode in which the occasional descriptions of nature are harmoniously blended with the human life in his poetry. Crabbe is an ardent lover of a certain type of scenery, to which justice has not often been done. We are told how, after a long absence from Suffolk, he rode sixty miles from his house to have a dip in the sea. Some of his poems appear to be positively impregnated with a briny, or rather perhaps a tarry odour. The sea which he loved was by no means a Byronic sea. It has no grandeur of storm, and still less has it the Mediterranean blue. It is the sluggish muddy element which washes the flat shores of his beloved Suffolk. He likes even the shelving beach, with fishermen's boats and decaying nets and remnants of stale fish. He loves

the dreary estuary, where the slow tide sways backwards and forwards, and whence

> High o'er the restless deep, above the reach
> Of gunner's hope, vast flocks of wildfowl stretch.

The coming generation of poets took to the mountains; but Crabbe remained faithful to the dismal and yet, in his hands, the impressive scenery of his native salt-marshes. His method of description suits the country. His verses never become melodramatic, nor does he ever seem to invest nature with the mystic life of Wordsworth's poetry. He gives the plain prosaic facts which impress us because they are in such perfect harmony with the sentiment. Here, for example, is a fragment from the "Village," which is simply a description of the neighbourhood of Aldborough:—

> Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,
> Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;
> From thence a length of burning sand appears,
> Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;
> Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
> Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye;
> There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
> And to the ragged infant threatens war;
> There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil;
> There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
> Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
> The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
> O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
> And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade.

The writer is too obviously a botanist; but the picture always remains with us as the only conceivable background for the poverty-stricken population whom he is about to describe. The actors in the "Borough" are presented to us in a similar setting; and it may be well to put a sea-piece beside this bit of barren common. Crabbe's range of descriptive power is pretty well confined within the limits so defined. He is scarcely at home beyond the tide-marks:—

> Be it the summer noon; a sandy space
> The ebbing tide has left upon its place;
> Then just the hot and stony beach above,
> Light twinkling streams in bright confusion move;
>
> * * * *
>
> There the broad bosom of the ocean keeps
> An equal motion; swelling as it sleeps,
> Then slowly sinking; curling to the strand,
> Faint lazy waves o'ercreep the ridgy sand,
> Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
> And back return in silence, smooth and slow.
> Ships in the calm seem anchored: for they glide
> On the still sea, urged slowly by the tide:
> Art thou not present, this calm scene before
> Where all beside is pebbly length of shore,
> And far as eye can reach, it can discern no more?

I have omitted a couplet which verges on the scientific; for Crabbe is unpleasantly anxious to leave nothing unexplained. The effect is, in its way, perfect. Any one who pleases may compare it with Wordsworth's calm in the verses upon Peele Castle, where the sentiment is given without the minute statement of facts, and where, too, we have the inevitable quotation about the "light that never was on sea or land," and is pretty nearly as rare in Crabbe's poetry. What he sees, we can all see, though not so intensely; and his art consists in selecting the precise elements that tell most forcibly towards bringing us into the required frame of mind. To enjoy Crabbe fully, we ought perhaps to be acclimatized on the coast of the Eastern counties; we should become sensitive to the plaintive music of the scenery, which is now generally drowned by the discordant sounds of modern watering-places, and would seem insipid to a generation which values excitement in scenery as in fiction. Readers, who measure the beauty of a district by its average height above the sea-level, and who cannot appreciate the charm of a "waste enormous marsh," may find Crabbe uncongenial.

The human character is determined, as Mr. Buckle and other philosophers have assured us, by the climate and the soil. A little ingenuity, such as those philosophers display in accommodating facts to theory, might discover a parallel between the type of Crabbe's personages and the fauna and flora of his native district. Declining a task which might lead to fanciful conclusions, I may assume that the East Anglian character is sufficiently familiar, whatever the causes by which it has been determined. To define Crabbe's poetry we have simply to imagine ourselves listening to the stories of his parishioners, told by a clergyman brought up amongst the lower rank of the middle classes, scarcely elevated above their prejudices, and not willingly leaving their circle of ideas. We must endow him with that simplicity of character which gives us frequent cause to smile at its proprietor, but which does not disqualify him from seeing a great deal further into his neighbours than they are apt to give him credit for doing. Such insight, in fact, is due not to any great subtlety of intellect, but to the possession of deep feeling and sympathy. Crabbe saw little more of Burke than would have been visible to an ordinary Suffolk farmer. When transplanted to a ducal mansion, he only drew the pretty obvious inference, inferred in a vigorous poem, that a patron is a very disagreeable and at times a very mischievous personage. The joys and griefs which really interest him are of the very tangible and solid kind which affect men and women to whom the struggle for existence is a stern reality. Here and there his good-humoured but rather clumsy ridicule may strike some lady to whom some demon has whispered "have a taste;" and who turns up her nose at the fat bacon on Mr. Tovell's table. He pities her squeamishness, but thinks it rather unreasonable. He satirizes too the heads of the rustic aristocracy; the brutal squire who bullies his nephew, the clergyman, for preaching against his vices, and corrupts the whole neighbourhood; or the speculative banker who cheats old maids

under pretence of looking after their investments. If the squire does not generally appear in Crabbe in the familiar dramatic character of a rural Lovelace, it is chiefly because Crabbe has no great belief in the general purity of the inferior ranks of rural life. But his most powerful stories deal with the tragedies—only too lifelike—of the shop and the farm. He describes the temptations which lead the small tradesman to adulterate his goods, or the parish clerk to embezzle the money subscribed in the village church, and the evil effects of dissenting families who foster a spiritual pride which leads to more unctuous hypocrisy; for though he says of the wicked squire, that

> His worship ever was a churchman true,
> And held in scorn the methodistic crew,

the scorn is only objectionable to him in so far as it is a cynical cloak for scorn of good morals. He tells how boys run away to sea, or join strolling players, and have in consequence to beg their bread at the end of their days. The almshouse or the county gaol is the natural end of his villains, and he paints to the life the evil courses which generally lead to such a climax. Nobody describes better the process of going to the dogs. And most of all, he sympathises with the village maiden who has listened too easily to the voice of the charmer in the shape of a gay sailor or a smart London footman, and has to reap the bitter consequences of her too easy faith. Most of his stories might be paralleled by the experience of any country clergyman who has entered into the life of his parishioners. They are as commonplace and as pathetic as the things which are happening round us every day, and which fill a neglected paragraph in a country newspaper. The treatment varies from the purely humorous to the most deep and genuine pathos; though it seldom takes us into the regions of the loftier imagination.

The more humorous of these performances may be briefly dismissed. Crabbe possesses the faculty, but not in any eminent degree; his hand is a little heavy, and one must remember that Mr. Tovell and his like were of the race who require to have a joke driven into their heads with a sledge hammer. Once or twice we come upon a sketch which may help to explain Miss Austen's admiration. There is an old maid devoted to Mira, and rejoicing in stuffed puppies and parrots, who might have been another Emma Woodhouse, and a parson who would have suited the Eltons admirably:

> Fiddling and fishing were his arts; at times
> He altered sermons and he aimed at rhymes;
> And his fair friends, not yet intent on cards,
> Oft he amused with riddles and charades.

Such sketches are a pleasant relief to his more sombre portraiture; but it is in the tragic elements that his true power comes out. The motives of his stories may be trivial, but never the sentiment. The deep manly emotion makes us forget not only the frequent clumsiness of his

style but the pettiness of the incident, and, what is more difficult, the rather bread-and-butter tone of morality. If he is a little too fond of bringing his villains to the gallows, he is preoccupied less by the external consequences than by the natural working of evil passions. With him sin is not punished by being found out, but by disintegrating the character and blunting the higher sensibilities. He shows—and the moral, if not new, is that which possesses the really intellectual interest—how evil-doers are tortured by the cravings of desires that cannot be satisfied, and the lacerations inflicted by ruined self-respect. And therefore there is a truth in Crabbe's delineations which is quite independent of his more or less rigid administration of poetical justice. His critics used to accuse him of having a low opinion of human nature. It is quite true that he assigns to selfishness and brutal passion a very large part in carrying on the machinery of the world. Some readers may infer that he was unlucky in his experience and others that he loved facts too unflinchingly. His stories sometimes remind one of Balzac's in the descriptions of selfishness triumphant over virtue. One, for example, of his deeply pathetic poems is called the "Brothers;" and repeats the old contrast given in Fielding's Tom Jones and Blifil. The shrewd sly hypocrite has received all manner of kindnesses from the generous and simple sailor, and when, at last, the poor sailor is ruined in health and fortune, he comes home expecting to be supported by the gratitude of the brother, who has by this time made money and is living at his ease. Nothing can be more pathetic or more in the spirit of some of Balzac's stories than the way in which the rich man receives his former benefactor; his faint recognition of fraternal feelings gradually cools down under the influence of a selfish wife; till at last the poor old sailor is driven from the parlour to the kitchen, and from the kitchen to the loft, and finally deprived of his only comfort, his intercourse with a young nephew not yet broken into hardness of heart. The lad is not to be corrupted by the coarse language of his poor old uncle. The rich brother suspects that the sailor has broken this rule, and is reviling him for his ingratitude, when suddenly he discovers that he is abusing a corpse. The old sailor's heart is broken at last; and his brother repents too late. He tries to comfort his remorse by cross-examining the boy, who was the cause of the last quarrel:—

> "Did he not curse me, child?" "He never cursed,
> But could not breathe, and said his heart would burst."
> "And so will mine——" "But, father, you must pray;
> My uncle said it took his pains away."

Praying, however, cannot bring back the dead; and the fratricide, for such he feels himself to be, is a melancholy man to the end of his days. In Balzac's hands repentance would have had no place, and selfishness been finally triumphant and unabashed. We need not ask which would be the most effective or the truest treatment; though I must put in a word for the superior healthiness of Crabbe's mind. There is nothing morbid about him. Still it would be absurd to push such a comparison far.

Crabbe's portraits are only spirited vignettes compared with the elaborate full-lengths drawn by the intense imagination of the French novelist; and Crabbe's whole range of thought is narrower. The two writers have a real resemblance only in so far as in each case a powerful accumulation of life-like details enables them to produce a pathos, powerful by its vivid reality.

The singular power of Crabbe is in some sense more conspicuous in the stories where the incidents are almost audaciously trifling. One of them begins with this not very impressive and very ungrammatical couplet:—

> With our late Vicar, and his age the same,
> His clerk, hight Jachin, to his office came.

Jachin is a man of oppressive respectability; so oppressive, indeed, that some of the scamps of the borough try to get him into scrapes by temptations of a very inartificial kind, which he is strong enough to resist. At last, however, it occurs to Jachin that he can easily embezzle part of the usual monthly offerings while saving his character in his own eyes by some obvious sophistry. He is detected and dismissed, and dies after coming upon the parish. These materials for a tragic poem are not very promising; and I do not mean to say that the sorrows of poor Jachin effect us as deeply as those of Gretchen in *Faust*. The parish clerk is perhaps a fit type of all that was least poetical in the old social order of the country, and virtue which succumbs to the temptation of taking two shillings out of a plate scarcely wants a Mephistophiles to overcome it. We may perhaps think that the apologetic note which the excellent Crabbe inserts at the end of his poem, to the effect that he did not mean by it to represent mankind as "puppets of an overpowering destiny," or "to deny the doctrine of seducing spirits," is a little superfluous. The fact that a parish-clerk has taken to petty pilfering can scarcely justify those heterodox conclusions. But when we have smiled at Crabbe's philosophy, we begin to wonder at the force of his sentiment. A blighted human soul is a pathetic object, however paltry the temptation to which it has succumbed. Jachin has the dignity of despair, though he is not quite a fallen archangel; and Crabbe's favourite scenery harmonises with his agony.

> In each lone place, dejected and dismay'd,
> Shrinking from view, his wasting form he laid;
> Or to the restless sea and roaring wind
> Gave the strong yearnings of a ruined mind;
> On the broad beach, the silent summer day,
> Stretch'd on some wreck, he wore his life away;
> Or where the river mingles with the sea,
> Or on the mud-bank by the elder tree,
> Or by the bounding marsh-dyke, there was he.

Nor would he have been a more pitiable object if he had betrayed a nation or sold his soul for a garter instead of the pillage of a subscription plate. Poor old Jachin's story may seem to be borrowed from a commonplace tract; but the detected pilferer, though he has only lost the respect

of the parson, the overseer, and the beadle, touches us deeply as the Byronic hero who has fallen out with the whole system of the world.

If we refuse to sympathize with the pang due to so petty a catastrophe—though our sympathy should surely be proportioned to the keenness of the suffering rather than the absolute height of the fall—we may turn to tragedy of a deeper dye. Peter Grimes, as his name indicates, was a ruffian from his infancy. He once knocked down his poor old father, who warned him of the consequences of his brutality:—

> On an inn-settle, in his maudlin grief,
> This he revolved, and drank for his relief.

Adopting such a remedy, he sank from bad to worse, and gradually became a thief, a smuggler, and a social outlaw. In those days, however, as is proved by the history of Mrs. Brownrigg, parish authorities practised the "boarding-out system" after a reckless fashion. Peter was allowed to take two or three apprentices in succession, whom he bullied, starved, and maltreated, and who finally died under suspicious circumstances. The last was found dead in Peter's fishing-boat after a rough voyage; and though nothing could be proved, the mayor told him that he should have no more slaves to belabour. Peter, pursuing his trade in solitude, gradually became morbid and depressed. The melancholy estuary became haunted by ghostly visions. He had to groan and sweat with no vent for his passion:—

> Thus by himself compelled to live each day,
> To wait for certain hours the tide's delay;
> At the same time the same dull views to see,
> The bounding marsh-bank and the blighted tree;
> The water only, when the tides were high,
> When low, the mud half-covered and half-dry;
> The sun-burnt tar that blisters on the planks,
> And bank-side stakes in their uneven ranks;
> Heaps of entangled weeds that slowly float,
> As the tide rolls by the impeded boat.

Peter grew more sullen, and the scenery became more weird and depressing. The few who watched him remarked that there were three places where Peter seemed to be more than usually moved. For a time he hurried past them, whistling as he rowed; but gradually he seemed to be fascinated. The idle lodgers in the summer saw a man and boat lingering in the tideway, apparently watching the gliding waves without casting a net or looking at the wildfowl. At last, his delirium becoming stronger, he is carried to the poorhouse, and tells his story to the clergyman. Nobody has painted with greater vigour that kind of externalized conscience which may still survive in a brutalized mind. Peter Grimes, of course, sees his victims' spirits and hates them. He fancies that his father torments him out of spite, characteristically forgetting that the ghost had some excuse for his anger:—

> 'Twas one hot noon, all silent, still, serene,
> No living being had I lately seen;

I paddled up and down and dipped my net,
But (such his pleasure) I could nothing get,—
A father's pleasure, when his toil was done,
To plague and torture thus an only son!
And so I sat and looked upon the stream,
How it ran on, and felt as in a dream;
But dream it was not; no!—I fixed my eyes
On the mid stream and saw the spirits rise;
I saw my father on the water stand,
And hold a thin pale boy in either hand;
And there they glided ghastly on the top
Of the salt flood, and never touched a drop;
I would have struck them, but they knew the intent,
And smiled upon the oar, and down they went.

Remorse in Peter's mind takes the shape of bitter hatred for his victims; and with another characteristic confusion, he partly attributes his sufferings to some evil influence intrinsic in the locality:—

There were three places, where they ever rose,—
The whole long river has not such as those,—
Places accursed, where, if a man remain,
He'll see the things which strike him to the brain.

And then the malevolent ghosts forced poor Peter to lean on his oars, and showed him visions of coming horrors. Grimes dies impenitent, and fancying that his tormentors are about to seize him. Of all haunted men in fiction, it is not easy to think of a case where the horror is more terribly realized. The blood-boulter'd Banquo tortured a noble victim, but scarcely tortured him more effectually. Peter Grimes was doubtless a close relation of Peter Bell. Bell having the advantage of Wordsworth's interpretation, leads us to many thoughts which lie altogether beyond Crabbe's reach; but, looking simply at the sheer tragic force of the two characters, Grimes is to Bell what brandy is to small beer. He would never have shown the white feather like his successor, who,

after ten months' melancholy,
Became a good and honest man.

If, in some sense, Peter Grimes is the most effective of Crabbe's heroes, he would, if taken alone, give a very distorted impression of the general spirit of the poetry. It is only at intervals that he introduces us to downright criminals. There is, indeed, a description of a convicted felon, which, according to Macaulay, has made "many a rough and cynical reader cry like a child," and which, if space were unlimited, would make a striking pendant to the agony of the burdened Grimes. But, as a rule, Crabbe can find motives enough for tenderness in sufferings which have nothing to do with the criminal law, and of which the mere framework of the story is often interesting enough. His peculiar power is best displayed in so presenting to us the sorrows of commonplace characters as to make us feel that a shabby coat and a narrow education, and the most unromantic causes, need not cut off our sympathies with a

fellow-creature; and that the dullest tradesman who treads on our toes in an omnibus may want only a power of articulate expression to bring before us some of the deepest of all problems. The parish clerk and the grocer—or whatever may be the proverbial epitome of human dullness—may swell the chorus of lamentation over the barrenness and the hardships and the wasted energies and the harsh discords of life which is always "steaming up" from the world, and to which it is one, though perhaps not the highest, of the poet's functions to make us duly sensible. Crabbe, like all realistic writers, must be studied at full length, and therefore quotations are necessarily unjust. It will be sufficient if I refer—pretty much at random—to the short stories of "Phœbe Dawson" in the *Parish Register*, to the more elaborate stories of "Edward Shore" and the "Parting Hour" in the *Tales*, or to the story of "Ruth" in the *Tales of the Hall*, where again the dreary pathos is strangely heightened by Crabbe's favourite seaport scenery, to prove that he might be called as truly as Goldsmith *affectuum potens*, though scarcely *lenis*, *dominator*.

It is time, however, to conclude by a word or two as to Crabbe's peculiar place in the history of English literature. I said that, unlike his contemporaries, Cowper and Burns, he adhered rigidly to the form of the earlier eighteenth century school, and partly for this reason excited the wayward admiration of Byron, who always chose to abuse the bridge which carried him to fame. But Crabbe's clumsiness of expression makes him a very inadequate successor of Pope or of Goldsmith, and his claims are really founded on the qualities which led Byron to call him "nature's sternest painter, yet her best." On this side he is connected with some tendencies of the school which supplanted his early models. So far as Wordsworth and his followers represented the reaction from an artificial to a love of unsophisticated nature, Crabbe is entirely at one with them. He did not share that unlucky taste for the namby-pamby by which Wordsworth annoyed his contemporaries, and spoilt some of his earlier poems. Its place was filled in Crabbe's mind by an even more unfortunate disposition for the simply humdrum and commonplace, which, it must be confessed, makes it almost as hard to read a good deal of his verses as to consume large quantities of suet pudding, and has probably destroyed his popularity with the present generation. Still, Crabbe's influence was powerful as against the old conventionality. He did not, like his predecessors, write upon the topics which interested "persons of quality," and never gives us the impression of having composed his rhymes in a full-bottomed wig or even in a Grub Street garret. He has gone out into country fields and village lanes, and paints directly from man and nature, with almost a cynical disregard of the accepted code of propriety. But the points on which he parts company with his more distinguished predecessors is equally obvious. Mr. Stopford Brooke has lately been telling us with great eloquence what is the theology which underlies the poetical tendencies of the last generation of poets. Of that creed, a sufficiently vague one, it must be admitted, Crabbe was by no means an apostle. Rather

one would say he was as indifferent as a good old-fashioned clergyman could very well be to the existence of any new order of ideas in the world. The infidels, whom he sometimes attacks, read Bolingbroke, and Chubb, and Mandeville, and have only heard by report even of the existence of Voltaire. The Dissenters, whom he so heartily detests, have listened to Whitefield and Wesley, or perhaps to Huntington, S.S.—that is, as it may now be necessary to explain, Sinner Saved. Every newer development of thought was still far away from the quiet pews of Aldborough, and the only form of Church restoration of which he has heard is the objectionable practice of painting a new wall to represent a growth of lichens. Crabbe appreciates the charm of the picturesque, but has never yet heard of our elaborate methods of creating modern antiques. Lapped in such ignorance, and with a mind little given to speculation, it is only in character that Crabbe should be totally insensible to the various moods of thought represented by Wordworth's pantheistic conceptions of nature, or by Shelley's dreamy idealism, or Byron's fierce revolutionary impulses. Still less, if possible, could he sympathize with that love of beauty, pure and simple, of which Keats was the first prophet. He might, indeed, be briefly described by saying that he is at the very opposite pole from Keats. The more bigoted admirers of Keats—for there are bigots in all matters of taste or poetry as well as in science or theology or politics—would refuse the title of poet to Crabbe, altogether on the strength of the absence of this element from his verses. Like his most obvious parallels in painting, he is too fond of boors and pothouses to be allowed the quality of artistic perception. I will not argue the point, which is, perhaps, rather a question of classification than of intrinsic merit; but I will venture to suggest a test which will, I think, give Crabbe a very firm, though, it may be, not a very lofty place. I should be unwilling to be reckoned as one of Macaulay's "rough and cynical readers." I admit that I can read the story of the convicted felon, or of Peter Grimes without indulging in downright blubbering. Most readers, I fear, can in these days get through pathetic poems and novels without absolutely using their pocket-handkerchiefs. But though Crabbe may not prompt such outward and visible signs of emotion, I think that he produces a more distinct titillation of the lachrymatory glands than almost any poet of his time. True, he does not appeal to emotions, accessible only through the finer intellectual perceptions, or to the thoughts which "lie too deep for tears." That prerogative belongs to men of more intense character, greater philosophical power, and more delicate instincts. But the power of touching readers by downright pictures of homespun griefs and sufferings is one which, to my mind, implies some poetical capacity, and which clearly belongs to Crabbe.

My Loss.

In the world was one green nook I knew,
Full of roses, roses red and white,
Reddest roses summer ever grew,
Whitest roses ever pearled with dew;
And their sweetness was beyond delight,
Was all love's delight.

Wheresoever in the world I went
Roses were, for in my heart I took
Blow and blossom and bewildering scent,
Roses never with the summer spent,
Roses always ripening in that nook,
Love's far summer nook.

In the world a soddened plot I know,
Blackening in this chill and misty air,
Set with shivering bushes in a row,
One by one the last leaves letting go:
Wheresoe'er I turn I shall be there,
Always sighing there.

Ah, my folly! Ah, my loss, my pain!
Dead, my roses that can blow no more!
Wherefore looked I on our nook again?
Wherefore went I after autumn's rain
Where the summer roses bloomed before,
Bloomed so sweet before?

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Virgil's Sea Descriptions.

Among the crowds mustering at the sea's margin, we trust there are those who will not object to let the reminiscent murmur of a Latin line mix the rising, the falling, the tossing of its syllables with the multitudinous ripple, the hollow plash, the tumbling roll of the waves it tries to picture. We doubt, however, that the Virgilian music, stately as it is, will coincide with that of the ocean only most fragmentarily; for we have to charge it against Virgil that his sea descriptions are poor—that they are failures. Indeed, we solemnly affirm that he was what might fairly be styled sea-blind. Everybody's verbal descriptions of the ocean fail; but they do so after more or less of success. Virgil in this task represents zero among poets of the first class.

Let us at once honestly make a needed qualification in admitting that literary description of any and all natural objects is still in a very rudimentary stage. Human language, modern English as well as ancient Latin, remains poorly equal to it. A great show of praise is sometimes made on this point; but this is because, without being fully aware of it, we have all practically agreed to consider descriptions in words as being much better than they really are. If a poet brings a score of words together in full fitness, so that they clearly show us the object they stand for, we fall into a rapture over the feat. Any one who had the heart to be unyieldingly critical would have little difficulty in making plain with what meagre verbal accounts of things we are satisfied. Chaucer and Burns show just the bent head of the daisy in their pictured phrase: generation after generation never wearies of praising it. But repeat the words over a real cluster of the yellow-hearted, white-rayed, crimson-edged, fly-haunted, sun-loving, wind-scared, woolly-stemmed, broad green-leaved, root-hiding things, and you will find a good many details available for poetry left out. Our string of compounded names is a mere catalogue, hard and cumbrous enough to kill the fancy; but that is the very fault of language we are complaining of. For adequate verbal descriptions we need great pages as they now stand compressing into paragraphs, sentences of these crushing into phrases, the words themselves refining to a glittering powder, and then to be able to make better epithets of the coloured syllabic particles. At present, the utmost that can be done in the most likely cases is to try and give the effect of the activity of a single sense. There are instances in which this has nearly been achieved; but they are of things so simple that somehow it is embarrassing to name them.

One modern poet has partially caught the coo of the wood-pigeons; another the sound of rain among the trees; a third the spilling ripple of the brook. Though naturally most successful with sounds, they have some achievements with respect to the other senses. They have lighted up a few phrases with the great shining of the sea on sudden coasts; some make wide moorlands stretch far away into the dim horizon of the verse; once and again we are even made to feel the dark striving rise and over-flowing forward-reach of things in motion. But how brief all the quotations would be! In poetry a line and a half is a great achievement; to sustain the perfection past the first fulfilled rhyme is a miracle. The wisest nearly stay at epithets. And in the case of the sea, a huge difficulty is that it stirs two senses. The eye and the ear act so closely in the actual observing of it that the association is tyrannous in reminiscence. You scarcely could hear the ocean in the dark without the eye insisting on tracing some faint glimmer of the waves; it would hardly be possible for you to behold the tossing of the waves from any distance without the ear giving some faint hum of their music, if it were only like that of the dry sea-shell. For a man to set himself to imitate by the utterance of his lines the sounds of the sea would be a hopeless task; for him to aim in addition at so setting the facets of his syllables that, while accent, emphasis, and tone were giving the beat of the waves, we should detect the flash of the sunlight in and through them, the words in the line a little darkening here and there for cloud shadows, or, again, taking fire for a blaze of sandy shore, would be fatal to any human wits. These are impossibilities; but then it is for literature to hope and expect their achievement, though it does not know how they are to come. Is it not itself an enchantment from first to last? Its one bounden duty is never to despair of verbal wonders, but to be always looking for, always inviting them, ceaselessly muttering its charms, thinking no words too high, nor too humble, to serve as the beginnings of the incantation. Save for this, poets would be even as other men. The only rule that can be laid down in the matter is that you shall apply your heart fully-opened to the object needed to be described and let the mystic volubility work as it sweetly may. No one will wish to deny that literature has, as a secret ideal, this hopeless task of literal faithfulness. From those who do not show some knowledge of this secret we turn away in disappointment.

But it is not in this hypercritical sense of failure in mimetic description only that we venture to arraign Virgil's dealing with the sea. It is one of his standing eulogies that he showed miraculous ability in that way in the case of several objects; but before he could be said to have failed with respect to the ocean there must be some evidence of his having tried. There is no sign of it. The charge to be urged against him is the capital one of never having made the attempt; so sinning in this matter of the sea against the fundamental literary obligation.

Before we go on to the proof, one word more on the general question. It may be asked, how has descriptive literature obtained any credit? how

can it persist, if this is the state of verbal representation at which we still stand? Well, all natural objects, scenes, and aspects of the world arouse, besides and below the appeals they make to the special senses, a common central emotion arising out of their practical operation on human fortunes. If a thing has not power to touch our lot of itself directly, it still may stir this central feeling by some borrowed reminiscence of either actual association or figurative illustration. This, which we call the central sentiment of things, is not exclusively attached to any of the sense-impressions belonging to the object; it is in every case necessarily challenged more promptly, more completely, by some one of them; but it is more or less common to all of them. It can sustain itself on fragments of them, it can bear eking out, the substituting even of the impressions of one sense by those of another. In this way an easier language of a didactic kind, not adequately descriptive, serves; one in which, while blundering tremendously in our description of the object, we can intelligibly express our primitive relation to it in its bearing on our lot. By means of this didactic element literature has made up its too great show of triumphs; solely owing to it poetry gets a triumph over the other arts. If the literary description of an object fails at any point, the central sentiment of it is still saved if the reminiscence of a conjoined sense-impression is brought in in time; the feeling lowers, but it lasts on, and only finally flickers out when the verbiage drivels into irrelevancy, the words no longer keeping the thing before the mind at all. Down to the last moment all may be in a sort retrieved by the lumbering resource of Personification, which lazily patches all omissions of description, the stale artifice of many generations. A very slight examination would bring out what a hotch-potch of sense-impressions many famous descriptions are. But if this central emotion of things can manage with a jumbled dialect of sense-impressions, its full articulateness asks a better representation, and it is itself in that way ameliorated, for in nearly every case its original native melancholy is oppressive. Told in fitting words, things lighten; losing something of their primitive heaviness. When success is achieved, we know from the literary ecstasy instantly arising, one of the purest pleasures the human heart has.

Virgil has not advanced the mimetic description of the sea, nor in any way bettered its central sentiment. He feels no interest in it; he describes it as being more savage than it ever was. In literature, the sea is all the worse for Virgil's having dealt with it. We will turn to the proofs.

The "Æneid," but that the sea goes for nothing in it, might almost be styled a sea-poem. Its scene is as often water as land. It includes storms, shipwrecks—both on the coast and in mid-ocean—the fairest of fair weather, morn dawning over the waters, repeated sunsets at sea, night embarkations, solemn watches with the waves all around and the stars overhead. Every possible aspect of the sea is beheld, and in no single instance is the description successful according to the wants of the modern imagination. The poem, as nobody needs telling, begins its

events with a tremendous sea-piece. The very first sight we get of the hero and his companions, they are "dividing the foaming brine with their keels," and the initial incident is a shipwreck. The description, assuredly, has overwhelming vigour in it; and, as the scene was brought about by Æolus letting all the winds loose together, with the purpose of gratifying Juno's wish to sink the whole fleet, it is scarcely open to any mere criticism founded on what might be expected to happen in a natural way. No mortal can say what might not happen as the work of one celestial acting at the urging of another. All that can be ventured on is, that such a storm could never happen without Æolus and Juno. The only wind which does not rage is the west, though that is partly substituted by what is called the gusty south-west. An impression of unusual turmoil is given, and that is what Virgil sought; but it is got by a jumble of violence of every kind. Winds, billows, lightning, thunder, reefs, shallows, eddies, are mixed together. The only detail of disaster left out is collision among the ships, which with a fleet so crowded is the one thing that would have occurred, had this been a natural storm. Such a tempest now rages in a transpontine theatre, and in no other part of the world. It takes Neptune himself to still it in the "Æneid." The famous simile by which the quieting of the waves is pictured is drawn from the land—the soothing of a mob by a man of piety and virtues. Cymothoë and Triton assist in getting the ships off the rocks. The whole scene is a medley of artificial machinery and natural effects which moderns are not able to appreciate. We had better put aside this opening incident, into which the supernatural enters, and turn to passages of a more mortal character.

So soon as Æneas and his companions of the seven surviving ships reach the shore, the hero climbs a rock to gain what Virgil styles a far-extended view of the sea, in the hope of descrying the missing ships. It was now the goldenest of weather, Neptune's finest, Æolus's quietest; the sea must have stretched most tranquilly before him. Æneas does not detect the ships, and he might not have seen the ocean for anything he says of it. The feeling of contrast in the scenes does not stir within him in the least. Three stags are more in the way of a hungry man, and he levels his arrow at them as they stray on the shore. Soon afterwards occurs one of Virgil's very few fine epithets applied to the ocean. In describing Jove as looking down upon it, *despiciens*, he uses the phrase "*mare velivolum.*" A sail-whitened sea is a bold figure, sinning only by excess of goodness. There would be a little superfluity of force in it now, with a good many more sails flying in all quarters. It shows a natural action of the fancy in framing Jove's bird's-eye view. Early in the second book occurs the night-return of the Grecian fleet, craftily sailing back from Tenedos. This is what is made of it: "And now the Argive host approached from Tenedos in arrayed ships, steering amidst the friendly silence of the moon for the well-known shores, when the royal ship put forth the signal flame."

Et jam Argiva phalanx instructis navibus ibat
A Tenedo, tacitæ per amica silentia lunæ,
Littora nota petens: flammas quum regia puppis
Extulerat.—B. II. lines 254-7.

All that is present to Virgil's mind is what may be called the business of the poem, the Greeks getting back unperceived, and the unbolting of the wooden horse. The ships crowding up in the moonlight, the patch of crimson reflection under the sail-shadow from the signal fire, do not touch him. He introduces the moon, but it is as being silent, not bright. The sea does not detain him for a moment. It would have detained a modern poet; the present ordinary requirements of our literary usage would not have permitted him to pass it by. If in only half-a-line he must at least have made it glitter. So much progress we at any rate have now made.

In the third book Æneas begins the account of his own sea-wanderings. The first voyage is not a long one in the poem. He embarks, departs from his native shores, and reaches Thrace in less than six lines; and, as for anything in the way of marine description, he might just as well have been on land. Affrighted by the ghost of Polydorus, they set out for Delos. Here comes one unwontedly tender touch, which the reader will not find repeated in all the poem. Virgil represents the breeze as with a gentle rustling, inviting them to the main—*lenis crepitans vocat Auster in altum*. But if he hears the wind, the wash of the waters never reaches him. Nothing whatever happens during the voyage. From Delos they steer for Crete, and, if the waves do not attract the eye, what stands up out of them does. Virgil can see "green Donyza," "marble Paros," and the Cyclades. Of these a charming little panoramic sketch is given: it is only to the water, not the land, that he is blind. Vainly they build Pergamea, for the pestilence falls on them, and the household gods, in a vision, tell Æneas that Crete is not the resting place. They sail for Hesperia. Now we have a second sea storm. This time it happens, not in shore, but out on the mid-ocean, and, so far as appears, comes without supernatural interference. This is the description Virgil puts in Æneas's mouth: "Then, o'er my head appears a dark rain cloud, bearing gloom and storm, and the wave roughens beneath the darkness. Straightway, the winds roll the waters, and great seas arise. Scattered, we are tossed on the wide flood. Stormy clouds enwrap the light, and damp darkness withdraws the face of heaven. The lightnings frequently flash from the rifted clouds. We are driven from our course, and wander in strange waters."

Tum mihi cærulcus supra caput adstitit imber,
Noctem hiememque ferens; et inhorruit unda tenebris.
Continuo venti volvunt mare, magnaque surgunt
Æquora: dispersi jactamur gurgite vasto.
Involvere diem nimbi, et nox humida cœlum
Abstulit. Ingeminant abruptis nubibus ignes.
Excutimur cursu, et cæcis erramus in undis.
B. III. lines 194–200.

For a tempest which lasts three days and three nights, this must be set down as erring on the side of tameness. But here Virgil is left alone with the natural scene; he has not Æolus and Neptune to excite his imagination. On the fourth day they catch sight of land; mountains open to view, smoke is seen to roll upwards; they sweep the "azure" water with their oars, and reach the Strophades. After their adventure with the Harpies, they hastily set sail afresh.

Another rapid sketch of the land which is passed is given. They see "woody Zacynthus," "steep-cragged Neritos," "rocky Ithaca." Anything which is dry, not moist, Virgil pictures, making it plain that if the sea had not been thoroughly uninteresting to him, he could have painted it easily. They spend the winter on shore under the storm-capped peaks of Mount Leucate; thence they launch again, reaching Buthrotum, where they have the affecting meeting with Andromache. Departing, they coast along Ceraunia, at evening landing to sleep on the shore. Now we have another night-scene. The pilot Palinurus rises before midnight to see if the voyage may begin. He listens for the breezes, he looks at the constellations. "When he sees all serene in the sky," he goes on board and gives the signal. The ocean might just as well have been fixed hard land under the gliding stars; there is not the slightest feeling of it being water. A very few lines further comes a dawn at sea, and this is Virgil's account of it: "And now Aurora, having put the stars to flight, blushed, when far off we see misty hills and the low-lying coast of Italy."

> Jamque rubescebat stellis Aurora fugatis,
> Quum procul obscuros colles, humilemque videmus
> Italiam.—B. III. lines 521-3.

The mention of Aurora blushing does duty for all the wonder of a daybreak over the sea. Warned by Anchises' interpretation of the ill-omen of beholding horses feeding, they refrain from landing at that first seen spot of the Italian shore, turning their yard-arms to the sea. By-and-by they near Charybdis. Their experience of it exactly fulfils Helenus's incomprehensible prediction of it. They drift the night through close to the shore of the Cyclops, where the next morning they behold the dawn afresh, that is to say, "Aurora scatters the damp shades from the sky." Having rescued Achemenides from Polyphemus, they sail again. After a coasting voyage, in which the sights of the land are well enough described, Æneas reaches the joyless shore of Drepanum. There his father dies. The voyage thence to Dido's beach, ending in that stupendous shipwreck, is dismissed in these words: "Departed from thence, the God drove me to your shores"—*Hinc me digressum vestris Deus appulit oris.*

Throughout the whole of these voyages, with the exception of when the sea had to be put in a turmoil to wreck the ships, and to disclose Charybdis, it has not arrested the poet's line for a moment, the water has not had a glance from him. It might have been an unreflecting floor, showing neither effects of the sky, of its own ceaseless stir, nor of the partially-embracing shore. One question arises, which we will bring in here. It

may not unfairly be said, that to Æneas the sea was but a toilsome and dangerous expanse, not to be described, but to be hurriedly got over and escaped from. His experiences of it are not to be compared with the long ocean combat of Ulysses, still Juno used it as her chief instrument of persecution. All the winds had been hurled against him on it; he had suffered shipwreck; his pilot was fated to be drowned in it. There is room for a plea of dramatic propriety. But at the point we have now reached Æneas's narrative ends; for the rest Virgil is himself the speaker. Let us see if there is any change.

Towards the close of the Fourth Book, after the dallying at Carthage with Dido, comes the hurried night embarkation. It is thus described: "The sea is hidden beneath the fleet. Hurrying, they dash up the foam, and sweep the azure sea"—

latet sub classibus æquor.
Adnixi torquent spumas, et cærula verrant.—B. IV. lines 582–3.

It will be admitted that this is no description. When day comes the poet's eyes are still closed to the actual scene. What he says of it is this: "And now Aurora, leaving the saffron bed of Tithonus, first scattered upon the world fresh light"—

Et jam prima novo spargebat lumine terras
Tithoni croceum linquens Aurora cubile.—B. IV. lines 584–5.

Dido, looking out from her watch-tower, beholds the fleet moving on with level sails; she notes that the shores and the harbours are quite deserted by the mariners; but she, like all the other Virgilian personages, does not catch a glimpse of the sea. She was in no mood to watch its glories, but, at least, she might have bethought herself of the waves as ministers of her prayed-for vengeance. At the commencement of the Fifth Book, Æneas is well out at sea, the description giving just one particle of detail: he is "cutting through the dark waves, ruffled by the north wind," which would have whitened their tops, if it darkened their sides. There must have been miles of them between the fleet and the land, where the smoke of Dido's pyre arose, but the tossing expanse was only so much distance to be looked across. Soon a storm comes on, and, in describing it, Virgil positively uses over again two lines from Book III. He relieves himself of all trouble by having a formula for storms. Once more he tells us that "a rain cloud stands over Æneas's head, bearing storm and gloom, and the wave ruffled beneath the darkness"—

Olli cæruleus supra caput adstitit imber,
Noctem hiememque ferens; et inhorruit unda tenebris.
B. V. lines 10–11.

The whole passage makes, we think, the weakest description of a sea-storm ever given. They yield to the storm, and once more turn towards Sicily. Acestes, from the top of a hill, beholds the ships coming, but he sees nothing more. The ocean is also invisible to him. Not far on in this book we have the sea races, part of the games in honour

of Anchises's memory. All is leisure now; the sea is not made odious by over-much toil. If water had had any charms for the poet they would have won a glance from him. The competing vessels are described particularly; in speaking of the rock where was the goal of the race, we have the phrase "foamy beach" (*spumantia littora*). But, in the account of the races, again the water goes for nothing. We are prosaically told that the sea was turned up and lashed into foam (*adductis spumant freta versa lacertis*); and, two lines further on, that all the surface of the water was opened.

Subsequently in this Book occurs the setting fire to the fleet by the women. The passage has much pathos from the contrast between the women's occupation and that of the men. They are far away on the lonely beach weeping for the loss of Anchises, while the men are celebrating the same regret by games. The poet says the "women all together were ever gazing on the main, and still weeping." They say "Alas, what seas and how much ocean still remain for us weary women!" A line showing the endless heaving of the watery expanse before them, with a murmur of the unsympathising wind foretelling perils, would have heightened the touching scene greatly. There is no such line. When Iris, disguised as Beroe, has persuaded the women to fire the ships, and Æneas, in despair, appeals to Jove, the storm which comes to quench the flames has no relation to the sea. The steep hills tremble with the thunder, so do the level plains. But Virgil's fancy will not glance towards the sea. Not a single peal bellows on that side, the whole waste of waters is left unused, and a *land-shower* puts out the flames.

Here the weariest of the matrons, and some of the men, equally sick at heart of the sea, are left, the rest starting on the last voyage prior to reaching Italy. Then we come upon the splendid picture of Neptune and his watery retinue. Fine as is the account of the god in his chariot, with the group of huge ancient and lovely attendants surrounding him in his progress, the sea itself reckons for nothing in the picture. It forms a road for the glittering procession, and that is all; Neptune's car shines azure; the waves are not of any colour. Not a spot of hue, not a scintillation of reflected light, is visible from them. This whole scene is a crucial one; it directly proves that the waves had no beauty in the Latin poet's eyes, and that when he wished to make the sea interesting, the only way, in his judgment, of doing so was to people it with personifications. Apart from these feigned inhabitants of the water, Virgil saw nothing in it to describe.

One more sea incident happens ere Italy is reached; it is again a night scene; the fleet is running before favouring breezes, with the stars visible, but, as it would seem, no moon. The god Sleep, disguised as Phorbas, descends and appears at the elbow of the watchful Palinurus, sitting at the helm, the only one awake. Pointing out to him that all is calm, the god urges him to close his eyes, offering to take his post for him. Palinurus's reply is in every way worthy of a pilot who is not a poet. He

says, "Would you have me believe in such a monster? Why should I trust Æneas to the treacherous gales, having been so often deceived by the frauds of the serene sky?"—

mene huic confidere monstro?
Æneam credam quid enim fallacibus austris,
Et cœli toties deceptus fraude sereni?—B. V. lines 849–51.

Palinurus is plunged overboard by the god. It is worth noting that afterwards, when Æneas meets Palinurus's ghost among the shades, Virgil, with strictest dramatic propriety, makes him use a pilot's form of oath, "By the *savage* seas I swear," &c. After Palinurus's fatal tumble, the ships pass the cliffs of the Sirens, where we are told, "hoarsely roared the rocks resounding with the restless sea," perhaps the best sea line in all Virgil:—

Tum ranca assiduo longe sale saxa sonabant.—B. V. line 866.

Æneas awakens and guides the vessel for the rest of the night. In the morning they gain the Italian shore, anchor the ships, and land at Cumæ. Then follows the descent of Æneas into the other world, guided by the Sibyl.

The same fate of ill-success whenever the scene is not dry pursues Virgil even there. In the Sixth Book he has to describe Cocytus. To ask for exact local particulars would be unreasonable, but it is clear that the poet did not conceive it as a scene anywhere. He uses words as they come. There is a jumble of banks and coasts, pools and streams, floods and marshes. It is right to say that the other subterranean stream, Lethe, fares no better at Virgil's hands. He describes it, or rather speaks of it, as flowing in a retired vale, past woods with rustling brakes; and a stream of considerable size it must have been, since about it unnumbered tribes and nations (*innumeræ gentes populique*) hover, like humming bees in the fields; Æneas, says the poet, was startled at the sudden sight of the stream; no glimpse of it do we get in any of the lines. Of what hue was its desirable wave no hint is given.

Now we near the ending of the search for the fated Hesperian land. When Æneas has built his old nurse's mound (Caieta) on the shore where the ships had been awaiting him, they sail again. One natural touch must be noted. Throughout nearly a whole line he makes "the sea sparkle underneath the moon"—

splendet tremulo sub lumine pontus.—B. VII. line 9.

Such a stroke, from the wonder of its rarity, tells upon a reader with more than its proper effect. Neptune having taken care to save the fleet from the Circean shores, we have the last dawn at sea. Alas, it is Aurora in her rosy chariot again! This is the description of the last glorious morning of Æneas's sea-wanderings: "And now the sea began to blush with rays, and in the lofty sky saffron Aurora shone in her rosy car"—

Jamque rubescebat radiis mare et æthere ab alto
Aurora in roseis fulgebat lutea bigis.—B. VII. lines 25–6.

They gain the Tibur's mouth and shelter in the river. Once in contact with the land the great poet's imagination is free again. His little picture of the river entrance shaded with groves, the air musical from fluttering birds of various plumage, is delightful.

In order to make our instances complete, we must not overlook Æneas's subsequent return by sea from his Etrurian allies, with Pallas on board his own ship (Book X.). One line we may note in the description of Aulestes's vessel, with its figure-head of Triton: "The foaming billow," we are told, "gurgled beneath the monstrous breast" (*spumea semifero sub pectore murmurat unda*). It is not an achievement to go into special raptures over, as being an addition to description in this kind; still the gurgle of the water does tell upon the ear; it is a detail of actual observation, and as such comes most welcome. There follows the artificial meeting in mid-voyage with the sea-nymphs, into which the vessels left near the camp, and, threatened by the Rutulians, had been changed. When Cymodocea, their spokeswoman, concluding her warning, pushed Æneas's tall ship, the poet tells us, it flew swifter than dart or arrow that rivals the wind in speed. No doubt, it would do so. The scene is one of which the modern imagination cannot make anything. The voyage ends in the opposed, confused landing on the shore, involving the wreck of Tarcho's vessel. In the same Book (X.) Juno offers to Turnus the bait of Æneas's wraith, and draws him on board the ship, which so conveniently had a plank gangway laid ready from a ledge of the rock. The whirling tide bears him and it far out to sea, on his magic voyage to his father's city. Beyond the ship gliding, and waves and tide both pushing it on, we are told nothing of this most wondrous voyage. Book XI. ends with a sunset at sea, beheld from the land: "Rosy Phœbus was bathing his weary horses in the Iberian flood"—

> roseus fessos jam gurgite Phœbus Ibero
> Tingat equos.—B. XI. lines 913–14.

It matches the dawn with which that book opens: "In the meantime, Aurora, rising, leaves the ocean" (*Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit*). One last partial glimpse we get of the sea in the closing book of the poem: "The horses of the sun are arising from the flood, and from uplifted nostrils breathe forth the day"—

> primum alto se gurgite tollunt
> Solis equi, lucemque elatis naribus efflant.—B. XII. lines 114–15.

Artificial to the very last.

In this sketch we have exhausted the sea-allusions of the great story. This is absolutely all that Virgil makes of the ocean in the whole of Æneas's sea wanderings, either as described by the hero or by the mouth of the poet himself. There is scarcely any possible marine effect which he has not the opportunity of picturing, yet in no single passage is it possible to detect any spark of true feeling for the water, beyond that of a dreary discontent at its power and savageness. It might be thought

that he knew nothing of the sea—that he had never seen it. But Horace's famous ode, praying for fair weather for him, is evidence that he made at least one voyage. Still further is the puzzle heightened, when we remember that he is understood to have lived long at Naples, with its glorious bay.

But let us turn for a moment to the minor poems. In the Eclogues the sea is mentioned in some dozen lines, of course by way of illustrative reference. Towards the close of Eclogue IV. Virgil speaks of "plains of sea" (*tractus maris*). This does bring the object before the mind. And in the Fifth Eclogue occurs the only line anywhere which shows that Virgil had perceived the *music* of the sea, apart from its mere roaring, its hoarseness, its moaning. Mopsus, in extolling the song of Menalcas, asks, "What gifts are there that I can give you in return for such a lay? For neither the whistling of the south wind as it comes, nor *billow beaten shores* (*percussa fluctu littora*) delight me so," &c. The phrase itself may not be of the best, but there is the feeling of delight coupled with the sea. We eagerly hail the fact, and wish it were not unavoidable to mention that this Eclogue is known to have been modelled on Theocritus. Next, as to the Georgics; they have some thirty lines in which the sea occurs. From the nature of the work, the passages are for the most part only allusive; but of all Virgil's writings, it is here that we find the sea-phrases strongest, the descriptions truest. Some of the best lines, it is true, describe the coast rather than the ocean; as, for instance, the striking lines in the First Georgic, giving the signs of a coming tempest. There is also the passage a little further on, where the various water fowl are wantonly disporting themselves in the joy of their salt bath. The sketches show that Virgil's observation, if it fails utterly as to the sea itself, had gone to the very edge of the land—to the verge where it and the water mingle, and even a few inches beyond. In Book III. he catches sight for a moment of colour on the evening ocean; but it is far away in Scythia, and the sun-god is again descending in his chariot, to bathe it in the flaming water. Nor is "red surface of the ocean" (*oceani rubro . . . æquore*) a pearl of poetical description. It must be mentioned that in the Georgics occur two or three touches of reality of a very grotesque kind in reference to the sea. If in the Æneid, Virgil, in sketching Neptune and his train, gives a picture too artificially elegant for the modern fancy, in the Fourth Georgic he describes Proteus and his attendants in a style which is a trifle too realistic for us. "Monstrous herds and misshapen sea-calves" (*immania armenta et turpes phocas*) this watery shepherd has under his charge; and they come out of the flood, and sleep around him on the hot shore. At any rate, the passage has a rough power, as of a goblin story of the sea.

The question may be asked, What epithets does Virgil apply to the sea? For it will go hard with a poet, if he has any genuine emotion stirred in him by an object, if it does not flash out in a name, even should he find himself, for some reason, debarred from a detailed

description. Some epithets are themselves descriptions. Take three sample ones of Shakspeare, applied to this same subject. The "multitudinous" sea, "yeasty" waves, and the "wasteful" ocean. Virgil speaks of the sea as boundless ("immensi maris," Geo. lib. I., line 29); windy ("ventosa æquora," idem, line 206); faithless ("infidum marmor," idem, line 254); deep ("maria alta," G. II., line 479, et "maris alti," Æn. lib. V., line 799); dark blue ("mare purpureum," G. IV., line 373); azure ("vada cærula," Æn. lib. VII., line 198, et "cærula freta," idem, lib. X., line 209); mighty ("magnum æquor," Geo. IV., line 388); vast ("vasti ponti," idem, line 430); foaming ("spumantem undam," idem, line 529, et "spumantibus undis," Æn. lib. III., line 268); salt ("campos salis," idem, lib. X., line 214); moaning ("gemitum ingentem pelagi," idem, lib. III., line 555); restless ("assiduo sale," idem, lib. V., line 866); swelling ("fluctu tumenti," idem, lib. VII., line 810). He, also, speaks of the "perilous" seas.

These are all we notice in turning over the pages. Of them, "deep" appears to compete with "salt" for the position of favourite, "foaming" coming next. "Boundless," "restless," "faithless" are words which may be held to embody what we have earlier termed the central feeling of the object, but Virgil does not use them in a way showing any varying individual appreciation of them; they all seem to merge in the one sentiment of the savageness, danger, dread of the sea. It would not be fair to compare Virgil's epithets with those of Homer in relation to the ocean. The Greek language lent itself better to the compounding of phrases, besides the lighter feeling which the Greek sea, with its indented shores and lovely islands, naturally inspired among the people. Other reasons would make it unfair to instance modern poets (it is true, we have already mentioned Shakspeare), either our own or continental; our present mode of regarding natural objects as beautiful in themselves is not the ancient manner, as we will point out directly. But Virgil does not show to advantage in this matter alongside other Latin writers, even his contemporaries. Not to hunt for any out-of-the-way comparisons, take the author who competes successfully with him for the place of best-known. Horace is nearly as blind as Virgil to any downright beauty in the sea, but he says nothing tame of it. The ocean is mostly in a tempest with Horace.

But it is with Virgil we have specially to do in this paper, and we wish to part with the noble poet on the best terms possible. Within the narrow restraining shores of a simile Virgil could sway the sea well enough; a single wave cut off from the rest he was very successful with. Take the lines in the Third Georgic, where he so magnificently illustrates the anger of the bull by the figure of a whitening billow rolling in-shore. A simile much akin to it is used nearly as effectively in describing the fight with the rioters in the Seventh Book of the Æneid; and, in the Eleventh Book, in illustrating the fluctuations of battle between the Tuscans and the Rutulians, a still more sustained image is drawn from the alter-

nate rushes and withdrawals of the ocean tide upon the beach. Literature would have to be ransacked for a more nobly-managed simile. But our last completed proof that Virgil, though so impotent in the actual presence of the sea, seeing so little of its play, and deaf to all its music, still could deal with the ocean when he could do so, as it were, by reflecting it, we have designedly left till now. Virgil's grandest sea-piece was in metal—on the surface of Æneas's shield, he sees it all as in a mirror. Here the sea swells all gold, the blue waves foam in hoary spray, dolphins of shining silver sweep the flood in circles, and the brazen galleys of the opposing fleets burn upon the surging waters. The passage is too lengthy to quote; those who know Virgil will not need its quoting. If he had ever given us the direct picture of which this is the reflection, there would have been no room for criticism nineteen hundred years after. At least it is the noblest sea that ever flowed in metal.

Several reasons may be given why Virgil in his dealing with the sea exhibits these failures, as we moderns must consider them. In the first place, besides the unavoidable excess of the didactic element, a literary *fashion* of a very peculiar kind then prevailed. In the highest attempts at poetical description, it was thought there was something much finer to be tried after than natural accounts of the actual scenes, namely, the mythological personages conventionally associated with them. When a dawn at sea had to be related, it was not the ever-brightening sky and the dimpled stirrings of the far-flashing waves that were thought of, but the image of Aurora rising from the saffron couch of Tithonus; in the evening, there was not enough to satisfy in the tumultuous glories of the sun, half-hidden in his own splendours, sinking amidst orange clouds and crimson billows; in the heart of that shining business there was a brighter central vision of Phœbus unyoking his fiery horses, bathing them in the ocean. We cannot understand it; we have none of the cues of the old faiths to help us. It now seems unnatural, incredible that men ever thought such scenes too poor for them, and believed that they could put something better worth describing in their place. Still, it was so throughout the whole range of literary tasks. If a river had to be introduced at its best, an old man—Father Tibur—rises among the sedges; the flowing of his beard, not that of the stream, is what has to be admired. Or should a moonlight scene have to be pictured, the heavens themselves in their soft whiteness, as the silver orb glides through them, are not displayed,—we are told something of the kindly goddess in her nightly wandering car. These artificialities must have come hinderingly between the describer and natural objects, turning his gaze inwards. The fashion, however, sufficed for Virgil: he makes no attempt to alter it.

It may be that in those times a necessity of this sort was imposed by the spirit of Art itself—that natural objects were too disturbing in a part of their actual associations for the higher emotional uses; at least, that the pathetic feelings they stirred were too strong, too self-enforcing, for the serener enjoyments, without some abatement—this being got by

the human imagination substituting personifications, which left out to the required degree the agitating memories. The ocean, the sky, the weather were too fatal for men in those days to be lightly dealt with by them in their stark reality without mitigation. From this obligation we are now finally released.

The enquiry into the origin of the feeling of the picturesque among moderns is sometimes treated too trivially; it runs into a large question. The happy growing tendency to describe a natural fact in itself, progressively omitting all the traditionary accompaniments of simile and personification, is the late gift of Science to Literature, and is priceless. Science, by dwelling on objects for its own purposes of acquiring a knowledge of their details, has been perpetually surprised by the discovery that details are always beautiful when seen sufficiently. In this way, we at last have come to know that things in their completeness are of themselves more lovely than imagination could ever conceive by dealing with them in part. The result is already showing itself in the enlargement of Literature by the added department of a new poetic of the literal description of natural objects, though its progress must needs be slow. Absolutely new it, of course, could not be. In the remotest age it existed in the germ. The early poets were its prophets, some helping it with wonderful anticipations of later scientific disclosures of natural beauties. Our charge against Virgil is that, in his use of the sea, he has wholly failed in this bardic function—helping the advance of this literature of description not in the slightest. If personification was partially obligatory, he used it to the very full, as he also did simile, without betraying any perception that it was not the best, not the ultimate style.

One remark ought to be made for Virgil. There can be no doubt that the sea is actually much more interesting now than it was then. Owing to the modern scientific civilisation having given us greater power over Nature, there has been a general mitigation of the old bleakness of the central feeling of things arising out of their sway over the human lot; but in the case of no great object of Nature, no aspect of the world, has this blessed change been nearly so telling as with respect to the sea. In our own instance, the sentiment must have have ameliorated very greatly during the two generations that have witnessed steam navigation. The feeling of the ancient Latins towards the sea, we have already urged, was worse than that of the Greeks, differing more than theirs from the modern emotion. It is plain that the Romans had a sense of there being a certain malevolence in the ocean. Doubtless that is a feeling primitive in all men. We now can just detect it when actually beholding a great storm, or even feel it for just a moment after hearing of a great sea disaster; but its early strength seems to have survived late in them. It brings out very clearly the difference between the ancient and the modern feeling, when, in the face of the present belief that the sea is the commercial field for the union of distant peoples, we find Horace taking the very opposite view, saying that in vain has God in his wisdom separated land from land

by the estranging ocean, if impious barks will bound across it (Ode 8, lib. I.). The picture he and Virgil draw of merchant ships, in the world's future golden days, withdrawing from the sea, leaving its wide surface bare, shocks the modern imagination. It turns everything in our conception of the sea upside down. We scarcely can avoid a suspicion that both Virgil and Horace, in speaking of the sea, used *a more antiquated feeling* in reference to it than was actually current in their time. In the Augustan age, such Romans as were not writers of poetry scarcely could believe in the impiety of spreading a sail upon the waters. This must have been merely a literary tradition, and it contented Virgil; but, at any rate, the real feeling must have been one we can only very imperfectly understand, for the ocean grows ever more and more welcome to us—it has lost so much of its awful strangeness, its savage strength. Are there not "steam lanes" in the Atlantic, along which mighty steamers come and go nearly as punctually as if they were land omnibuses? Do not sails crowd up from every quarter of the horizon? We are getting a little familiarity with it below its surface. The course of its hot and cold currents, rushing like tremendous rivers through its depths, is partly known. Its gulfs are no longer bottomless to us. We have opened delighted eyes on its marine plants, on its countless inhabitants, vanishing away in myriads of harmless microscopic tribes. It is the latest opened treasure-house of Science.

Those who may read these words, with the music of the sea actually sounding in their ears, and with the glory of its tossing waves before their eyes, will not need telling how much of its beauty is yet undescribed. But in the verbal mosaic in which, let us hope, the ocean will one day shine and foam, when the new poetic of real description has developed its language of direct epithet, there will not be a single Virgilian gift—no, not so much as a word, a syllable.

Far from the Madding Crowd.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Fanny's Revenge.

"Do you want me any longer, ma'am?" enquired Liddy, at a later hour the same evening, standing by the door with a chamber-candlestick in her hand, and addressing Bathsheba, who sat cheerless and alone in the large parlour beside the first fire of the season.

"No more to-night, Liddy."

"I'll sit up for master if you like, ma'am. I am not at all afraid of Fanny, if I may sit in my own room and have a candle. She was such a childlike nesh young thing that her spirit couldn't appear to anybody if it tried, I'm quite sure."

"Oh, no, no! You go to bed. I'll sit up for him myself till twelve o'clock, and if he has not arrived by that time I shall give him up and go to bed too."

"It is half-past ten now."

"Oh! is it?"

"Why don't you sit upstairs, ma'am?"

"Why don't I?" said Bathsheba, desultorily. "It isn't worth while—there's a fire here. Liddy," she suddenly exclaimed in an impulsive and excited whisper, "have you heard anything strange said of Fanny?" The words had no sooner escaped her than an expression of unutterable regret crossed her face, and she burst into tears.

"No—not a word!" said Liddy, looking at the weeping woman with astonishment. "What is it makes you cry so, ma'am; has anything hurt you?" She came to Bathsheba's side with a face full of sympathy.

HER TEARS FELL FAST BESIDE THE UNCONSCIOUS PAIR.

"No, Liddy—I don't want you any more. I can hardly say why I have taken so to crying lately: I never used to cry. Good-night."

Liddy then left the parlour and closed the door.

Bathsheba was lonely and miserable now; not lonelier actually than she had been before her marriage; but her loneliness then was to that of the present time as the solitude of a mountain is to the solitude of a cave. And within the last day or two had come these disquieting thoughts about her husband's past. Her wayward sentiment that evening concerning Fanny's temporary resting-place had been the result of a strange complication of impulses in Bathsheba's bosom. Perhaps it would be more accurately described as a determined rebellion against her prejudices, a revulsion from a lower instinct of uncharitableness, which would have withheld all sympathy from the dead woman, because in life she had preceded Bathsheba in the attentions of a man whom Bathsheba had by no means ceased from loving, though her love was sick to death just now with the gravity of a further misgiving.

In five or ten minutes there was another tap at the door. Liddy reappeared and coming in a little way stood hesitating, until at length she said, "Maryann has just heard something very strange, but I know it isn't true. And we shall be sure to know the rights of it in a day or two."

"What is it?"

"Oh, nothing connected with you or us, ma'am! It is about Fanny. That same thing you have heard."

"I have heard nothing."

"I mean that a wicked story is got to Weatherbury within this last hour—that——" Liddy came close to her mistress and whispered the remainder of the sentence slowly into her ear, inclining her head as she spoke in the direction of the room where Fanny lay.

Bathsheba trembled from head to foot.

"I don't believe it!" she said, excitedly. "And it is not written on the coffin-cover."

"Nor I, ma'am. And a good many others don't; for we should surely have been told more about it if it had been true—don't you think so, ma'am?"

"We might or we might not."

Bathsheba turned and looked into the fire that Liddy might not see her face. Finding that her mistress was going to say no more, Liddy glided out, closed the door softly, and went to bed.

Bathsheba's face, as she continued looking into the fire that evening, might have excited solicitousness on her account even among those who loved her least. The sadness of Fanny Robin's fate did not make Bathsheba's glorious, although she was the Esther to this poor Vashti and their fates might be supposed to stand in some respects as contrasts to each other. When Liddy came into the room a second time the beautiful eyes which met hers had worn a listless weary look. When she went out after telling the story they had expressed wretchedness in full activity.

This also sank to apathy after a time. But her thoughts, sluggish and confused at first, acquired more life as the minutes passed, and the dull misgiving in her brow and eyes suddenly gave way to the stillness of concentration.

Bathsheba had grounds for conjecturing a connection between her own history and the dimly suspected tragedy of Fanny's end which Oak and Boldwood never for a moment credited her with possessing. The meeting with the lonely woman on the previous Saturday night had been unwitnessed and unspoken of. Oak may have had the best of intentions in withholding for as many days as possible the details of what had happened; but had he known that Bathsheba's perceptions had already been exercised in the matter, he would have done nothing to lengthen the minutes of suspense she was now undergoing, when the certainty which must terminate it would be the worst fact suspected after all.

She suddenly felt a longing desire to speak to some one stronger than herself, and so get strength to sustain her surmised position with dignity and her carking doubts with stoicism. Where could she find such a friend? nowhere in the house. She was by far the coolest of the women under her roof. Patience and suspension of judgment for a few hours were what she wanted to learn, and there was nobody to teach her. Might she but go to Gabriel Oak!—but that could not be. What a way Oak had, she thought, of enduring things. Boldwood, who seemed so much deeper and higher and stronger in feeling than Gabriel, had not yet learnt, any more than she herself, the simple lesson which Oak showed a mastery of by every turn and look he gave—that among the multitude of interests by which he was surrounded, those which affected his personal well-being were not the most absorbing and important in his eyes. Oak meditatively looked upon the horizon of circumstances without any special regard to his own standpoint in the midst. That was how she would wish to be. But then Oak was not racked by incertitude upon the inmost matter of his bosom as was she at this moment. Oak knew all that she wished to know—she felt convinced of that. If she were to go to him now at once and say no more than these few words, "What is the truth of the story?" he would feel bound in honour to tell her. It would be an inexpressible relief. No further speech would need to be uttered. He knew her so well that no eccentricity of behaviour in her would alarm him.

She flung a cloak round her, went to the door and opened it. Every blade, every twig was still. The air was yet thick with moisture, though somewhat less dense than during the afternoon, and a steady smack of drops upon the fallen leaves under the boughs was almost musical in its soothing regularity. It seemed better to be out of the house than within it, and Bathsheba closed the door, and walked slowly down the lane till she came opposite to Gabriel's cottage, where he now lived alone, having left Coggan's house through being pinched for room. There was a light in one window only, and that was downstairs. The shutters were not closed, nor was any blind or curtain drawn over the window, neither robbery nor observation being a contingency which could do much injury to

the occupant of the domicile. Yes, it was Gabriel himself who was sitting up: he was reading. From her standing-place in the road she could see him plainly, sitting quite still, his light curly head upon his hand, and only occasionally looking up to snuff the candle which stood beside him. At length he looked at the clock, seemed surprised at the lateness of the hour, closed his book, and arose. He was going to bed, she knew, and if she tapped it must be done at once.

Alas for her resolve; she felt she could not do it. Not for worlds now could she give a hint about her misery to him, much less ask him plainly for information. She must suspect, and guess, and chafe, and bear it all alone.

Like a homeless wanderer she lingered by the bank, as if lulled and fascinated by the atmosphere of content which seemed to spread from that little dwelling, and was so sadly lacking in her own. Gabriel appeared in an upper room, placed his light in the window-bench, and then—knelt down to pray. The contrast of the picture with her rebellious and agitated existence at this same time was too much for her to bear to look upon longer. It was not for her to make a truce with trouble by any such means. She must tread her giddy distracting measure to its last note, as she had begun it. With a swollen heart she went again up the lane, and entered her own door.

More fevered now by a reaction from the first feelings which Oak's example had raised in her, she paused in the hall, looking at the door of the room wherein Fanny lay. She locked her fingers, threw back her head, and strained her hot hands rigidly across her forehead, saying, with a hysterical sob, "Would to God you would speak and tell me your secret, Fanny! . . . . Oh, I hope, hope it is not true! . . . . If I could only look in upon you for one little minute I should know all!"

A few moments passed, and she added, slowly, "*And I will.*"

Bathsheba in after times could never gauge the mood which carried her through the actions following this murmured resolution on this memorable evening of her life. At the end of a short though undefined time she found herself in the small room, quivering with emotion, a mist before her eyes, and an excruciating pulsation in her brain, standing beside the uncovered coffin of the girl whose conjectured end had so entirely engrossed her, and saying to herself in a husky voice as she gazed within—

"It was best to know the worst, and I know it now!"

She was conscious of having brought about this situation by a series of actions done as by one in an extravagant dream; of following that idea as to method, which had burst upon her in the hall with glaring obviousness, by gliding to the top of the stairs, assuring herself by listening to the heavy breathing of her maids that they were asleep, gliding down again, turning the handle of the door within which the young girl lay, and deliberately setting herself to do what, if she had anticipated any such undertaking at night and alone, would have horrified her, but which, when done, was not so dreadful as was the conclusive proof which came with knowing beyond doubt the last chapter of Fanny's story.

Bathsheba's head sank upon her bosom, and the breath which had been bated in suspense, curiosity, and interest, was exhaled now in the form of a whispered wail: "Oh-h-h!" she said, and the silent room added length to her moan.

Her tears fell fast beside the unconscious pair: tears of a complicated origin, of a nature indescribable, almost indefinable except as other than those of simple sorrow. Assuredly their wonted fires must have lived in Fanny's ashes when events were so shaped as to chariot her hither in this natural, unobtrusive, yet effectual manner. The one feat alone—that of dying—by which a mean condition could be resolved into a grand one, Fanny had achieved. And to that had destiny subjoined this rencounter to-night, which had, in Bathsheba's wild imagining, turned her companion's failure to success, her humiliation to triumph, her lucklessness to ascendency; it had thrown over herself a garish light of mockery, and set upon all things about her an ironical smile. Fanny's face was framed in by that yellow hair of hers; and there was no longer much room for doubt as to the origin of the curl owned by Troy. In Bathsheba's heated fancy the innocent white countenance expressed a dim triumphant consciousness of the pain she was retaliating for her pain with all the merciless rigour of the Mosaic law: "Burning for burning; wound for wound; strife for strife."

Bathsheba indulged in contemplations of escape from her position by immediate death, which, thought she, though it was an inconvenient and awful way, had limits to its inconvenience and awfulness that could not be overpassed; whilst the shames of life were measureless. Yet even this scheme of extinction by death was but tamely copying her rival's method without the reasons which had glorified it in her rival's case. She glided rapidly up and down the room, as was mostly her habit when excited, her hands hanging clasped in front of her, as she thought and in part expressed in broken words: "Oh, I hate her, yet I don't mean that I hate her, for it is grievous and wicked; and yet I hate her a little! Yes, my flesh insists upon hating her, whether my spirit is willing or no. . . . . If she had only lived I could have been angry and cruel towards her with some justification; but to be vindictive towards a poor dead woman recoils upon myself. O God, have mercy! I am miserable at all this!"

Bathsheba became at this moment so terrified at her own state of mind that she looked around for some sort of refuge from herself. The vision of Oak kneeling down that night recurred to her, and with the imitative instinct which animates women she seized upon the idea, resolved to kneel, and if possible, pray. Gabriel had prayed; so would she.

She knelt beside the coffin, covered her face with her hands, and for a time the room was silent as a tomb. Whether from a purely mechanical, or from any other cause, when Bathsheba arose it was with a quieted spirit, and a regret for the antagonistic instincts which had seized upon her just before.

In her desire to make atonement she took flowers from a vase by the

window, and began laying them around the dead girl's head. Bathsheba knew no other way of showing kindness to persons departed than by giving them flowers. She knew not how long she remained engaged thus. She forgot time, life, where she was, what she was doing. A slamming together of the coach-house doors in the yard brought her to herself again. An instant after, the front door opened and closed, steps crossed the hall, and her husband appeared at the entrance to the room, looking in upon her.

He beheld it all by degrees, stared in stupefaction at the scene, as if he thought it an illusion raised by some fiendish incantation. Bathsheba, pallid as a corpse on end, gazed back at him in the same wild way.

So little are instinctive guesses the fruit of a legitimate induction that at this moment as he stood with the door in his hand Troy never once thought of Fanny in connection with what he saw. His first confused idea was that somebody in the house had died.

"Well—what?" said Troy, blankly.

"I must go! I must go!" said Bathsheba, to herself more than to him. She came with a dilated eye towards the door, to push past him.

"What's the matter, in God's name? who's dead?" said Troy.

"I cannot say; let me go out. I want air!" she continued.

"But no; stay, I insist!" He seized her hand, and then volition seemed to leave her, and she went off into a state of passivity. He, still holding her, came up the room, and thus, hand in hand, Troy and Bathsheba approached the coffin's side.

The candle was standing on a bureau close by them, and the light slanted down, distinctly enkindling the cold features within. Troy looked in, dropped his wife's hand, knowledge of it all came over him in a lurid sheen, and he stood still.

So still he remained that he could be imagined to have left in him no motive power whatever. The clashes of feeling in all directions confounded one another, produced a neutrality, and there was motion in none.

"Do you know her?" said Bathsheba, in a small enclosed echo, as from the interior of a cell.

"I do," said Troy.

"Is it she?"

"It is."

He had originally stood perfectly erect. And now, in the well-nigh congealed immobility of his frame could be discerned an incipient movement, as in the darkest night may be discerned light after a while. He was gradually sinking forwards. The lines of his features softened, and dismay modulated to illimitable sadness. Bathsheba was regarding him from the other side, still with parted lips and distracted eyes. Capacity for intense feeling is proportionate to the general intensity of the nature, and perhaps in all Fanny's sufferings, much greater relatively to her strength, there never was a time when she suffered in an absolute sense what Bathsheba suffered now.

This is what Troy did. He sank upon his knees with an indefinable union of remorse and reverence upon his face, and, bending over Fanny Robin, gently kissed her, as one would kiss an infant asleep to avoid awakening it.

At the sight and sound of that, to her, unendurable act, Bathsheba sprang towards him. All the strong feelings which had been scattered over her existence since she knew what feeling was seemed gathered together into one pulsation now. The revulsion from her indignant mood a little earlier, when she had meditated upon compromised honour, forestalment, eclipse by another, was violent and entire. All that was forgotten in the simple and still strong attachment of wife to husband. She had sighed for her self-completeness then, and now she cried aloud against the severance of the union she had deplored. She flung her arms round Troy's neck, exclaiming wildly from the deepest deep of her heart—

"Don't—don't kiss them! Oh, Frank, I can't bear it—I can't! I love you better than she did: kiss me too, Frank—kiss me! *You will, Frank, kiss me too!*"

There was something so abnormal and startling in the childlike pain and simplicity of this appeal from a woman of Bathsheba's calibre and independence that Troy, loosening her tightly clasped arms from his neck, looked at her in bewilderment. It was such an unexpected revelation of all women being alike at heart, even those so different in their accessories as Fanny and this one beside him, that Troy could hardly seem to believe her to be his proud wife Bathsheba. Fanny's own spirit seemed to be animating her frame. But this was the mood of a few instants only. When the momentary surprise had passed, his expression changed to a silencing imperious gaze.

"I will not kiss you," he said, pushing her away.

Had the wife now but gone no further. Yet, perhaps, under the harrowing circumstances, to speak out was the one wrong act which can be better understood, if not forgiven in her, than the right and politic one. All the feeling she had been betrayed into showing she drew back to herself again by a strenuous effort of self-command.

"What have you to say as your reason?" she asked, her bitter voice being strangely low—quite that of another woman now.

"I have to say that I have been a bad, black-hearted man," he answered.

"And that this woman is your victim; and I not less than she."

"Ah! don't taunt me, madam. This woman is more to me, dead as she is, than ever you were, or are, or can be. If Satan had not tempted me with that face of yours, and those cursed coquetries, I should have married her. I never had another thought till you came in my way. Would to God that I had; but it is all too late! I deserve to live in torment for this!" He turned to Fanny then. "But never mind, darling," he said; "in the sight of Heaven you are my very, very wife."

At these words there arose from Bathsheba's lips a long low cry of

measureless despair and indignation, such a wail of anguish as had never before been heard within those old-inhabited walls. It was the Τετέλεσται of her union with Troy.

"If she's—that,—what—am I?" she added, as a continuation of the same cry, and sobbing fearfully: and the rarity with her of such abandonment only made the condition more terrible.

"You are nothing to me—nothing," said Troy, heartlessly. "A ceremony before a priest doesn't make a marriage. I am not morally yours."

A vehement impulse to flee from him, to run from this place, hide, and escape humiliation at any price, not stopping short of death itself, mastered Bathsheba now. She waited not an instant, but turned to the door and ran out.

CHAPTER XLIV.

UNDER A TREE: REACTION.

BATHSHEBA went along the dark road, neither knowing nor caring about the direction or issue of her flight. The first time that she definitely noticed her position was when she reached a gate leading into a thicket overhung by some large oak and beech trees. On looking into the place it occurred to her that she had seen it by daylight on some previous occasion, and that what appeared like an impassable thicket was in reality a brake of fern, now withering fast. She could think of nothing better to do with her palpitating self than to go in here and hide; and entering, she lighted on a spot sheltered from the damp fog by a reclining trunk, where she sank down upon a tangled couch of fronds and stems. She mechanically pulled some armfuls round her to keep off the breezes, and closed her eyes.

Whether she slept or not that night Bathsheba was not clearly aware. But it was with a freshened existence and a cooler brain that, a long time afterwards, she became conscious of some interesting proceedings which were going on in the trees above her head and around.

A coarse-throated chatter was the first sound.

It was a sparrow just waking.

Next: "Chee-weeze-weeze-weeze!" from another retreat.

It was a finch.

Third: "Tink-tink-tink-tink-a-chink!" from the hedge.

It was a robin.

"Chuck-chuck-chuck!" overhead.

A squirrel.

Then, from the road, "With my ra-ta-ta, and my rum-tum-tum!"

It was a ploughboy. Presently he came opposite, and she believed from his voice that he was one of the boys on her own farm. He was

followed by a shambling tramp of heavy feet, and looking through the ferns Bathsheba could just discern in the wan light of daybreak a team of her own horses. They stopped to drink at a pond on the other side of the way. She watched them flouncing into the pool, drinking, tossing up their heads, drinking again, the water dribbling from their lips in silver threads. There was another flounce, and they came out of the pond, and turned back again towards the farm.

She looked further around. Day was just dawning, and beside its cool air and colours her heated actions and resolves of the night stood out in lurid contrast. She perceived that in her lap, and clinging to her hair, were red and yellow leaves which had come down from the tree and settled silently upon her during her partial sleep. Bathsheba shook her dress to get rid of them, when multitudes of the same family lying round about her rose and fluttered away in the breeze thus created, "like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing."

There was an opening towards the east, and the glow from the as yet unrisen sun attracted her eyes thither. From her feet, and between the beautiful yellowing ferns with their feathery arms, the ground sloped downwards to a hollow, in which was a species of swamp, dotted with fungi. A morning mist hung over it now—a fulsome yet magnificent silvery veil, full of light from the sun, yet semi-opaque—the hedge behind it being in some measure hidden by its hazy luminousness. Up the sides of this depression grew sheaves of the common rush, and here and there a peculiar species of flag, the blades of which glistened in the emerging sun like scythes. But the general aspect of the swamp was malignant. From its moist and poisonous coat seemed to be exhaled the essences of evil things in the earth, and in the waters under the earth. The fungi grew in all manner of positions from rotting leaves and tree stumps, some exhibiting to her listless gaze their clammy tops, others their oozing gills. Some were marked with great splotches, red as arterial blood—others were saffron yellow, and others tall and attenuated with stems like macaroni. Some were leathery and of richest browns. The hollow seemed a nursery of pestilences small and great, in the immediate neighbourhood of comfort and health, and Bathsheba arose with a tremor at the thought of having passed the night on the brink of so dismal a place.

There were now other footsteps to be heard along the road. Bathsheba's nerves were still unstrung: she crouched down out of sight again, and the pedestrian came into view. He was a schoolboy, with a bag slung over his shoulder containing his dinner, and a book in his hand. He paused by the gate, and, without looking up, continued murmuring words in tones quite loud enough to reach her ears.

"'O Lord, O Lord, O Lord, O Lord, O Lord':— that I know out o' book. 'Give us, give us, give us, give us, give us':— that I know. 'Grace that, grace that, grace that, grace that':— that I know." Other words followed to the same effect. The boy was of the dunce class apparently; the book was a psalter, and this was his way of learning the

collect. In the worst attacks of trouble there appears to be always a superficial film of consciousness which is left disengaged and open to the notice of trifles, and Bathsheba was faintly amused at the boy's method, till he too passed on.

By this time stupor had given place to anxiety, and anxiety began to make room for hunger and thirst. A form now appeared upon the rise on the other side of the swamp, half-hidden by the mist, and came towards Bathsheba. The female—for it was a female—approached with her face askance, as if looking earnestly on all sides of her. When she got a little further round to the left, and drew nearer, Bathsheba could see the new-comer's profile against the sunny sky, and knew the wavy sweep from forehead to chin, with neither angle nor decisive line anywhere about it, to be the familiar contour of Liddy Smallbury.

Bathsheba's heart bounded with gratitude in the thought that she was not altogether deserted, and she jumped up. "Oh, Liddy!" she said, or attempted to say; but the words had only been framed by her lips; there came no sound. She had lost her voice by exposure to the clogged atmosphere all these hours of night.

"Oh, ma'am! I am so glad I have found you," said the girl, as soon as she saw Bathsheba.

"You can't come across," Bathsheba said in a whisper, which she vainly endeavoured to make loud enough to reach Liddy's ears. Liddy, not knowing this, stepped down upon the swamp, saying, as she did so, "It will bear me up, I think."

Bathsheba never forgot that transient little picture of Liddy crossing the swamp to her there in the morning light. Iridescent bubbles of dank subterranean breath rose from the sweating sod beside the waiting-maid's feet as she trod, hissing as they burst and expanded away to join the vapoury firmament above. Liddy did not sink, as Bathsheba had anticipated. She landed safely on the other side, and looked up at the beautiful though pale and weary face of her young mistress.

"Poor thing!" said Liddy, with tears in her eyes. "Do hearten yourself up a little, ma'am. However did ——"

"I can't speak above a whisper—my voice is gone for the present," said Bathsheba, hurriedly. "I suppose the damp air from that hollow has taken it away. Liddy, don't question me, mind. Who sent you—anybody?"

"Nobody. I thought, when I found you were not at home, that something cruel had happened. I fancy I heard his voice late last night; and so, knowing something was wrong ——"

"Is he at home?"

"No; he left just before I came out."

"Is Fanny taken away?"

"Not yet. She will soon be—at nine o'clock.'

"We won't go home at present, then. Suppose we walk about in this wood?"

Liddy, without exactly understanding everything, or anything, in this episode, assented, and they walked together further among the trees.

"But you had better come in ma'am, and have something to eat. You will die of a chill!"

"I shall not come indoors yet—perhaps never."

"Shall I get you something to eat, and something else to put over your head besides that little shawl?"

"If you will, Liddy."

Liddy vanished, and at the end of twenty minutes returned with a cloak, hat, some slices of bread and butter, a tea-cup, and some hot tea in a little china jug.

"Is Fanny gone?" said Bathsheba.

"No," said her companion, pouring out the tea.

Bathsheba wrapped herself up and ate and drank sparingly. Her voice was then a little clearer, and a trifling colour returned to her face. "Now we'll walk about again," she said.

They wandered about the wood for nearly two hours, Bathsheba replying in monosyllables to Liddy's prattle, for her mind ran on one subject, and one only. She interrupted with:—

"I wonder if Fanny is gone by this time?"

"I will go and see."

She came back with the information that the men were just taking away the corpse; that Bathsheba had been enquired for; that she had replied to the effect that her mistress was unwell and could not be seen.

"Then, they think I am in my bedroom?"

"Yes." Liddy then ventured to add: "You said when I first found you that you might never go home again—you didn't mean it, ma'am?"

"No; I've altered my mind. It is only women with no pride in them who run away from their husbands. There is one position worse than that of being found dead in your husband's house from his ill-usage, and that is, to be found alive through having gone away to the house of somebody else. I've thought of it all this morning, and I've chosen my course. A runaway wife is an encumbrance to everybody, a burden to herself and a byword—all of which make up a heap of misery greater than any that comes by staying at home—though this may include the trifling items of insult, beating, and starvation. Liddy, if ever you marry—God forbid that you ever should!—you'll find yourself in a fearful situation; but mind this, don't you flinch. Stand your ground, and be cut to pieces. That's what I'm going to do."

"Oh, mistress, don't talk so!" said Liddy, taking her hand; "but I knew you had too much sense to bide away. May I ask what dreadful thing it is that has happened between you and him?"

"You may ask; but I may not tell."

In about ten minutes they returned to the house by a circuitous route, entering at the rear. Bathsheba glided up the back stairs to a disused attic, and her companion followed.

"Liddy," she said, with a lighter heart, for youth and hope had begun to re-assert themselves; "you are to be my confidante for the present—somebody must be—and I choose you. Well, I shall take up my abode here for a while. Will you get a fire lighted, put down a piece of carpet, and help me to make the place comfortable? Afterwards, I want you and Maryann to bring up that little iron bedstead in the small room, and the bed belonging to it, and a table, and some other things. . . . What shall I do to pass the heavy time away!"

"Hemming handkerchiefs is a very good thing," said Liddy.

"Oh, no, no! I hate needle-work—I always did."

"Knitting?"

"And that, too."

"You might finish your sampler. Only the carnations and peacocks want filling in; and then it could be framed and glazed, and hung beside you aunt's, ma'am."

"Samplers are out of date—horribly countrified. No, Liddy, I'll read. Bring up some books—not new ones. I haven't heart to read anything new."

"Some of your uncle's old ones, ma'am?"

"Yes. Some of those we stowed away in boxes." A faint gleam of humour passed over her face as she said: "Bring Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Maid's Tragedy;' and the 'Mourning Bride;' and—let me see—'Night Thoughts,' and the 'Vanity of Human Wishes.'"

"And that story of the black man, who murdered his wife Desdemona? It is a nice dismal one that would suit you excellent just now."

"Now, Lidd, you've been looking into my books, without telling me; and I said you were not to! How do you know it would suit me? It wouldn't suit me at all."

"But if the others do ——"

"No, they don't; and I won't read dismal books. Why should I read dismal books, indeed? Bring me 'Love in a Village,' and the 'Maid of the Mill,' and 'Doctor Syntax,' and some volumes of the 'Spectator.'"

All that day Bathsheba and Liddy lived in the attic in a state of barricade; a precaution which proved to be needless as against Troy, for he did not appear in the neighbourhood or trouble them at all. Bathsheba sat at the window till sunset, sometimes attempting to read, at other times watching every movement outside without much purpose, and listening without much interest to every sound.

The sun went down almost blood-red that night, and a livid cloud received its rays in the east. Up against this dark background the west front of the church tower—the only part of the edifice visible from the farm-house windows—rose distinct and lustrous, the vane upon the pinnacle bristling with rays. Here, about six o'clock, the young men of the village gathered, as was their custom, for a game of fives. The tower had been consecrated to this ancient diversion from time immemorial, the western façade conveniently forming the boundary of the churchyard at that end, where the ground was trodden hard and bare as a pavement by the players.

She could see the balls flying upwards, almost to the belfry window, and the brown and black heads of the young lads darting about right and left, their white shirt-sleeves gleaming in the sun; whilst occasionally a shout and a peal of hearty laughter varied the stillness of the evening air. They continued playing for a quarter of an hour or so, when the game concluded abruptly, and the players leapt over the wall and vanished round to the north side behind a yew tree, which was also half behind a beech, now spreading in one mass of golden foliage, on which the branches traced black lines.

"Why did the fives-players finish their game so suddenly?" Bathsheba enquired, the next time that Liddy entered the room.

"I think 'twas because two men came just then from Casterbridge and began putting up a grand carved tombstone," said Liddy. "The lads went to see whose it was."

"Do you know?" Bathsheba asked.

"I don't," said Liddy.

CHAPTER XLV.

Troy's Romanticism.

When Troy's wife had left the house at the previous midnight his first act was to cover the dead from sight. This done he ascended the stairs, and throwing himself down upon the bed, dressed as he was, he waited miserably for the morning.

Fate had dealt grimly with him through the last four-and-twenty hours. His day had been spent in a way which varied very materially from his intentions regarding it. There is always an inertia to be overcome in striking out a new line of conduct—not more in ourselves, it seems, than in circumscribing events, which appear as if leagued together to allow no novelties in the way of amelioration.

Twenty pounds having been secured from Bathsheba, he had managed to add to the sum every farthing he could muster on his own account, which had been seven pounds ten. With this money, twenty-seven pounds ten in all, he had hastily driven from the gate that morning to keep his appointment with Fanny Robin.

On reaching Casterbridge he left the horse and trap at an inn, and at five minutes before ten went to the bridge at the further end of the town, and sat himself upon the parapet. The clocks struck the hour, and no Fanny appeared. In fact at that moment she was being robed in her grave-clothes by two attendants at the Union poorhouse—the first and last tiring-women the gentle creature had ever been honoured with. The quarter went, the half hour. A rush of recollection came upon Troy as he waited: this was the second time she had broken a serious engagement with him. In anger he vowed it should be the last, and at eleven o'clock, when he had lingered and watched the stones of the bridge till

he knew every lichen upon their faces, and heard the chink of the ripples underneath till they oppressed him, he jumped from his seat, went to the inn for his gig, and in a bitter mood of indifference concerning the past, and recklessness about the future, drove on to Budmouth races.

He reached the race-course at two o'clock, and remained either there or in the town till nine. But Fanny's image as it had appeared to him in the sombre shadows of that Saturday evening returned to his mind, backed up by Bathsheba's reproaches. He vowed he would not bet, and he kept his vow, for on leaving the town at nine o'clock in the evening he had diminished his cash only to the extent of a few shillings.

He trotted slowly homeward, and it was now that he was struck for the first time with a thought that Fanny had been really prevented by illness from keeping her promise. This time she could have made no mistake. He regretted that he had not remained in Casterbridge and made enquiries. Reaching home he quietly unharnessed the horse and came indoors, as we have seen, to the fearful shock that awaited him.

As soon as it grew light enough to distinguish objects, Troy arose from the coverlet of the bed, and in a mood of absolute indifference to Bathsheba's whereabouts, and almost oblivious of her existence, he stalked downstairs and left the house by the back door. His walk was towards the churchyard, entering which he searched around till he found a newly dug unoccupied grave. The position of this having been marked he hastened on to Casterbridge, only pausing and musing for a while at the hill whereon he had last seen Fanny alive.

Reaching the town, Troy descended into a side street and entered a pair of gates surmounted by a board bearing the words, "Harrison, stone and marble mason." Within were lying about stones of all sizes and designs, inscribed as being sacred to the memory of unnamed persons who had not yet died.

Troy was so unlike himself now in look, word, and deed, that the want of likeness was perceptible even to his own consciousness. His method of engaging himself in this business of purchasing a tomb was that of an absolutely unpractised man. He could not bring himself to consider, calculate, or economise. He waywardly wished for something, and he set about obtaining it like a child in a nursery. "I want a good tomb," he said to the man who stood in a little office within the yard. "I want as good a one as you can give me for twenty-seven pounds."

It was all the money he possessed.

"That sum to include everything?"

"Everything. Cutting the name, carriage to Weatherbury and erection. And I want it now, at once."

"We could not get anything special worked this week."

"I must have it now."

"If you would like one of these in stock it could be got ready immediately."

"Very well," said Troy, impatiently. "Let's see what you have."

"The best I have in stock is this one," said the stonecutter, going into a shed. "Here's a marble headstone beautifully crocketed, with medallions beneath of typical subjects; here's the footstone after the same pattern, and here's the coping to enclose the grave. The polishing alone of the set cost me eleven pounds—the slabs are the best of their kind, and I can warrant them to resist rain and frost for a hundred years without flying."

"And how much?"

"Well I could add the name, and put it up at Weatherbury for the sum you mention."

"Get it done to-day, and I'll pay the money now."

The man agreed, and wondered at such a mood in a visitor who wore not a shred of mourning. Troy then wrote the words which were to form the inscription, settled the account and went away. In the afternoon he came back again, and found that the lettering was almost done. He waited in the yard till the tomb was packed, and saw it placed in the cart and starting on its way to Weatherbury, giving directions to the two men who were to accompany it to enquire of the sexton for the grave of the person named in the inscription.

It was quite dark when Troy came out of Casterbridge. He carried rather a heavy basket upon his arm, with which he strode moodily along the road, resting occasionally at bridges and gates, whereon he deposited his burden for a time. Midway on his journey he met in the darkness the men and the waggon which had conveyed the tomb. He merely enquired if the work was done, and, on being assured that it was, passed on again.

Troy entered Weatherbury churchyard about ten o'clock, and went immediately to the corner where he had marked the vacant grave early in the morning. It was on the north side of the tower, screened to a great extent from the view of passers along the road—a spot which until lately had been abandoned to heaps of stones and bushes of alder, but now it was cleared and made orderly for interments, by reason of the rapid filling of the ground elsewhere.

Here now stood the tomb as the men had stated, snow-white and shapely in the gloom, with a head and foot stone, and enclosing border of marble-work uniting them. In the midst was mould, suitable for plants.

Troy deposited his basket beside the tomb, and vanished for a few minutes. When he returned he carried a spade and a lantern, the light of which he directed for a few moments upon the tomb, whilst he read the inscription. He hung his lantern on the lowest bough of the yew tree, and took from his basket flower-roots of several varieties. There were bundles of snowdrop, hyacinth and crocus bulbs, violets and double daisies, which were to bloom in early spring, and of carnations, pinks, picotees, lilies of the valley, forget-me-not, summer's-farewell, meadow-saffron, and others, for the later seasons of the year.

Troy laid these out upon the grass, and with an impassive face set to work to plant them. The snowdrops were arranged in a line on the outside of the coping, the remainder within the enclosure of the grave. The crocuses and hyacinths were to grow in rows; some of the summer flowers he placed over her head and feet, the lilies and forget-me-nots over her heart. The remainder were dispersed in the spaces between these.

Troy, in his prostration at this time, had no perception that in the futility of these romantic doings, dictated by a remorseful reaction from previous indifference, there was any element of absurdity. Deriving his idiosyncracies from both sides of the Channel, he showed at such junctures as the present the inelasticity of the Englishman, mingled with that blindness to the line where sentiment verges on mawkishness, so characteristic of the French.

It was a cloudy, muggy, and very dark night, and the rays from Troy's lantern spread into the two old yews with a strange illuminating power, flickering, as it seemed, up to the black ceiling of cloud above. He felt a large drop of rain upon the back of his hand, and presently one came and entered the open side of the lantern, whereupon the candle sputtered and went out. Troy was weary, and it being now not far from midnight, and the rain threatening to increase, he resolved to leave the finishing touches of his labour until the day should break. He groped along the wall and over the graves in the dark till he found himself round at the south side. Here he entered the porch, and, reclining upon the bench within, fell asleep.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Gurgoyle: its Doings.

The tower of Weatherbury Church was a square erection of fourteenth-century date, having two stone gurgoyles on each of the four faces of its parapet. Of these eight carved protuberances only two at this time continued to serve the purpose of their erection—that of spouting the water from the lead roof within. One mouth in each front had been closed by bygone churchwardens as superfluous, and two others were broken away and choked—a matter not of much consequence to the well-being of the tower, for the two mouths which still remained open and active were gaping enough to do all the work.

It has been sometimes argued that there is no truer criterion of the vitality of any given art-period than the power of the master-spirits of that time in grotesque; and certainly in the instance of Gothic art there is no disputing the proposition. Weatherbury tower was a somewhat early instance of the use of an ornamental parapet in parish as distinct from cathedral churches, and the gurgoyles, which are the necessary correlatives of a parapet, were exceptionally prominent—of the boldest

cut that the hand could shape, and of the most original design that a human brain could conceive. There was, so to speak, that symmetry in their distortion which is less the characteristic of British than of Continental grotesques of the period. All the eight were different from each other. A beholder was convinced that nothing on earth could be more hideous than those he saw on the south side until he went round to the north. Of the two on this latter face only that at the north-eastern corner concerns the story. It was too human to be called like a dragon, too impish to be like a man, too animal to be like a fiend, and not enough like a bird to be called a griffin. This horrible stone entity was fashioned as if covered with a wrinkled hide; it had short, erect ears, eyes starting from their sockets, and its fingers and hands were seizing the corners of its mouth, which they thus seemed to pull open to give free passage to the water it vomited. The lower row of teeth was quite washed away, though the upper still remained. Here and thus, jutting a couple of feet from the wall against which its feet rested as a support, the creature had for four hundred years laughed at the surrounding landscape, voicelessly in dry weather, and in wet with a gurgling and snorting sound.

Troy slept on in the porch, and the rain increased outside. Presently the gurgoyle spat. In due time a small stream began to trickle through the seventy feet of aërial space between its mouth and the ground, which the water-drops smote like duckshot in their accelerated velocity. The stream thickened in substance, and increased in power, gradually spouting further and yet further from the side of the tower. When the rain fell in a steady and ceaseless torrent the stream dashed downward in volumes.

We follow its course to the ground at this point of time. The base of the liquid parabola has come forward from the wall, has advanced over the plinth mouldings, over a heap of stones, over the marble border, into the midst of Fanny Robin's grave.

The force of the stream had, until very lately, been received upon some loose stones spread thereabout, which had acted as a shield to the soil under the onset. These during the summer had been cleared from the ground, and there was now nothing to resist the downfall but the bare earth. For several years the stream had not spouted so far from the tower as it was doing on this night, and such a contingency had been overlooked. Sometimes this obscure corner received no inhabitant for the space of two or three years, and then it was usually but a pauper, a poacher, or other sinner of undignified sins.

The persistent torrent from the gurgoyle's jaws directed all its vengeance into the grave. The rich tawny mould was stirred into motion and boiled like chocolate. The water accumulated and washed deeper down, and the roar of the pool thus formed spread into the night as the head and chief among other noises of the kind created by the deluging rain. The flowers so carefully planted by Fanny's repentant lover began to move and writhe in their bed. The winter-violets turned slowly upside down, and became a mere mat of mud. Soon the snowdrop and other

bulbs danced in the boiling mass like ingredients in a cauldron. Plants of the tufted species were loosened, rose to the surface, and floated off.

Troy did not awake from his comfortless sleep till it was broad day. Not having been in bed for two nights his shoulders felt stiff, his feet tender, and his head heavy. He remembered his position, arose, shivered, took the spade, and again went out.

The rain had quite ceased, and the sun was shining through the green, brown, and yellow leaves, now sparkling and varnished by the rain-drops to the brightness of similar effects in the landscapes of Ruysdael and Hobbema, and full of all those infinite beauties that arise from the union of water and colour with high lights. The air was rendered so transparent by the heavy fall of rain that the autumn hues of the middle distance were as rich as those near at hand, and the remote fields intercepted by the angle of the tower appeared in the same plane as the tower itself.

He entered the gravel path which would take him behind the tower. The path, instead of being stony as it had been the night before, was browned over with a thin coating of mud. At one place in the path he saw a tuft of stringy roots washed white and clean as a bundle of tendons. He picked it up—surely it could not be one of the primroses he had planted? He saw a bulb, another, and another as he advanced. Beyond doubt they were the crocuses. With a face of perplexed dismay Troy turned the corner and then beheld the wreck the stream had made.

The pool upon the grave had soaked away into the ground, and in its place was a hollow. The disturbed earth was washed over the grass and pathway in the guise of the brown mud he had already seen, and it spotted the marble tombstone with the same stains. Nearly all the flowers were washed clean out of the ground, and they lay, roots upwards, on the spots whither they had been splashed by the stream.

Troy's brow became heavily contracted. He set his teeth closely, and his compressed lips moved as those of one in great pain. This singular accident, by a strange confluence of emotions in him, was felt as the sharpest sting of all. Troy's face was very expressive, and any observer who had seen him now would hardly have believed him to be a man who had laughed, and sung, and poured love-trifles into a woman's ear. To curse his miserable lot was at first his impulse, but even that lowest stage of rebellion needed an activity whose absence was necessarily antecedent to the existence of the morbid misery which wrung him. The sight, coming as it did, superimposed upon the other dark scenery of the previous days, formed a sort of climax to the whole panorama, and it was more than he could endure. Sanguine by nature, Troy had a power of eluding grief by simply adjourning it. He could put off the consideration of any particular spectre till the matter had become old and softened by time. The planting of flowers on Fanny's grave had been perhaps but a species of elusion of the primary grief, and now it was as if his intention had been known and circumvented.

Almost for the first time in his life, Troy, as he stood by this dismantled grave, wished himself another man. It is seldom that a person with much animal spirit does not feel that the fact of his life being his own is the one qualification which singles it out as a more hopeful life than that of others who may actually resemble him in every particular. Troy had felt, in his transient way, hundreds of times, that he could not envy other people their condition, because the possession of that condition would have necessitated a different personality, when he desired no other than his own. He had not minded the peculiarities of his birth, the vicissitudes of his life, the meteor-like uncertainty of all that related to him, because these appertained to the hero of his story, without whom there would have been no story at all for him; and it seemed to be only in the nature of things that matters would right themselves at some proper date and wind up well. This very morning the illusion completed its disappearance, and, as it were all of a sudden, Troy hated himself. The suddenness was probably more apparent than real. A coral reef which just comes short of the ocean surface is no more to the horizon than if it had never been begun, and the mere finishing stroke is what often appears to create an event which has long been potentially an accomplished thing.

He stood and meditated—a miserable man. Whither should he go? "He that is accursed, let him be accursed still," was the pitiless anathema written in this spoliated effort of his new-born solicitousness. A man who has spent his primal strength in journeying in one direction has not much spirit left for reversing his course. Troy had, since yesterday, faintly reversed his; but the merest opposition had disheartened him. To turn about would have been hard enough under the greatest Providential encouragement; but to find that Providence, far from helping him into a new course, or showing any wish that he might adopt one, actually jeered his first trembling and critical attempt in that kind, was more than nature could bear.

He slowly withdrew from the grave. He did not attempt to fill up the hole, replace the flowers, or do anything at all. He simply threw up his cards and forswore his game for that time and always. Going out of the churchyard silently and unobserved—none of the villagers having yet risen—he passed down some fields at the back, and emerged just as secretly upon the high road. Shortly afterwards he had gone from the village.

Meanwhile Bathsheba remained a voluntary prisoner in the attic. The door was kept locked, except during the entries and exits of Liddy, for whom a bed had been arranged in a small adjoining room. The light of Troy's lantern in the churchyard was noticed about ten o'clock by the maid-servant, who casually glanced from the window in that direction whilst taking her supper, and she called Bathsheba's attention to it. They looked curiously at the phenomenon for a time, until Liddy was sent to bed.

Bathsheba did not sleep very heavily that night. When her attendant was unconscious and softly breathing in the next room, the mistress of the house was still looking out of the window at the faint gleam spreading from among the trees—not in a steady shine, but blinking like a revolving coast-light, though this appearance failed to suggest to her that a person was passing and repassing in front of it. Bathsheba sat here till it began to rain, and the light vanished, when she withdrew to lie restlessly in her bed and re-enact in a worn mind the lurid scene of yesternight. Almost before the first faint sign of dawn appeared she arose again, and opened the window to obtain a full breathing of the new morning air, the panes being now wet with trembling tears left by the night rain, each one rounded with a pale lustre caught from primrose-hued slashes through a cloud low down in the awakening sky. From the trees came the sound of steady dripping upon the drifted leaves under them, and from the direction of the church she could hear another noise—peculiar, and not intermittent like the rest—the purl of water falling into a pool.

Liddy knocked at eight o'clock, and Bathsheba unlocked the door.

"What a heavy rain we've had in the night, ma'am!" said Liddy, when her enquiries about breakfast had been made.

"Yes; very heavy."

"Did you hear the strange noise from the churchyard?"

"I heard one strange noise. I've been thinking it must have been the water from the tower spouts."

"Well, that's what the shepherd was saying, ma'am. He's now gone on to see."

"Oh! Gabriel has been here this morning?"

"Only just looked in in passing—quite in his old way, which I thought he had left off lately. But the tower spouts used to spatter on the stones, and we are puzzled, for this was like the boiling of a pot."

Not being able to read, think, or work, Bathsheba asked Liddy to stay and breakfast with her. The tongue of the more childish woman still ran upon recent events. "Are you going across to the church, ma'am?" she asked.

"Not that I know of," said Bathsheba.

"I thought you might like to go and see where they have put Fanny. The tree hides the place from your window."

Bathsheba had all sorts of dreads about meeting her husband. "Has Mr. Troy been in to-night?" she said.

"No, ma'am; I think he's gone to Budmouth."

Budmouth! The sound of the word carried with it a much diminished perspective of him and his deeds; there were fifteen miles interval betwixt them now. She hated questioning Liddy about her husband's movements, and indeed had hitherto sedulously avoided doing so; but now all the house knew that there had been some dreadful disagreement between them, and it was futile to attempt disguise. Bathsheba had reached a stage at which people cease to have any appreciative regard for public opinion.

"What makes you think he has gone there?" she said.

"Laban Tall saw him on the Budmouth road this morning before breakfast."

Bathsheba was momentarily relieved of that wayward heaviness of the past twenty-four hours which had quenched the vitality of youth in her without substituting the philosophy of maturer years, and she resolved to go out and walk a little way. So when breakfast was over, she put on her bonnet, and took a direction towards the church. It was nine o'clock, and the men having returned to work again from their first meal, she was not likely to meet many of them in the road. Knowing that Fanny had been laid in the reprobates' quarter of the graveyard, called in the parish "behind church," which was invisible from the road, it was impossible to resist the impulse to enter and look upon a spot which, from nameless feelings, she at the same time dreaded to see. She had been unable to overcome an impression that some connection existed between her rival and the light through the trees.

Bathsheba skirted the buttress, and beheld the hole and the tomb, its delicately veined surface splashed and stained just as Troy had seen it and left it two hours earlier. On the other side of the scene stood Gabriel. His eyes, too, were fixed on the tomb, and her arrival having been noiseless, she had not as yet attracted his attention. Bathsheba did not at once perceive that the grand tomb and the disturbed grave were Fanny's, and she looked on both sides and around for some humbler mound, earthed up and clodded in the usual way. Then her eye followed Oak's, and she read the words with which the inscription opened:—

"Erected by Francis Troy in memory of Fanny Robin."

Oak saw her, and his first act was to gaze enquiringly and learn how she received this knowledge of the authorship of the work, which to himself had caused considerable astonishment. But such discoveries did not much affect her now. Emotional convulsions seemed to have become the commonplaces of her history, and she bade him good morning, and asked him to fill in the hole with the spade which was standing by. Whilst Oak was doing as she desired, Bathsheba collected the flowers, and began planting them with that sympathetic manipulation of roots and leaves which is so conspicuous in a woman's gardening, and which flowers seem to understand and thrive upon. She requested Oak to get the churchwardens to turn the lead-work at the mouth of the gurgoyle that hung gaping down upon them, that by this means the stream might be directed sideways, and a repetition of the accident prevented. Finally, with the superfluous magnanimity of a woman whose converse and narrower instincts have brought down bitterness upon her instead of love, she wiped the mud spots from the tomb as if she rather liked its words than otherwise, and went home again.

CHAPTER XLVII.

ADVENTURES BY THE SHORE.

TROY wandered along towards the west. A composite feeling, made up of disgust with the, to him, humdrum tedium of a farmer's life, gloomy images of her who lay in the churchyard, remorse, and a general aversion to his wife's society, impelled him to seek a home in any place on earth save Weatherbury. The sad accessories of Fanny's end confronted him as vivid pictures which threatened to be indelible, and made life in Bathsheba's house intolerable. At three in the afternoon he found himself at the foot of a slope more than a mile in length, which ran to the ridge of a range of hills lying parallel with the shore, and forming a monotonous barrier between the basin of cultivated country inland and the wilder scenery of the coast. Up the hill stretched a road perfectly straight and perfectly white, the two sides approaching each other in a gradual taper till they met the sky at the top about two miles off. Throughout the length of this narrow and irksome inclined plane not a sign of life was visible on this garish afternoon. Troy toiled up the road with a languor and depression greater than any he had experienced for many a day and year before. The air was warm and muggy, and the top seemed to recede as he approached.

At last he reached the summit, and a new and novel prospect burst upon him with an effect almost like that of the Pacific upon Balboa's gaze. The broad steely sea, marked only by faint lines, which had a semblance of being etched thereon to a degree not deep enough to disturb its general evenness, stretched the whole width of his front and round to the left, where, near the town and port of Budmouth, the sun bristled down upon it, and banished all colour to substitute in its place a clear oily polish. Nothing moved in sky, land, or sea, except a frill of milkwhite foam along the nearer angles of the shore, shreds of which licked the contiguous stones like tongues.

He descended and came to a small basin of sea enclosed by the cliffs. Troy's nature freshened within him; he thought he would rest and bathe here before going further. He undressed and plunged in. Inside the cove the water was uninteresting to a swimmer, being smooth as a pond, and to get a little of the ocean swell Troy presently swam between the two projecting spurs of rock which formed the pillars of Hercules to this miniature Mediterranean. Unfortunately for Troy a current unknown to him existed outside, which, unimportant to craft of any burden, was awkward for a swimmer who might be taken in it unawares. Troy found himself carried to the left and then round in a swoop out to sea.

He now recollected the place and its sinister character. Many bathers had there prayed for a dry death from time to time, and, like Gonzalo, had been unanswered; and Troy began to deem it possible that he might be added to their number. Not a boat of any kind was at

present within sight, but far in the distance Budmouth lay upon the sea, as it were quietly regarding his efforts, and beside the town the harbour showed its position by a dim meshwork of ropes and spars. After well-nigh exhausting himself in attempts to get back to the mouth of the cove, in his weakness swimming several inches deeper than was his wont, keeping up his breathing entirely by his nostrils, turning upon his back a dozen times over, swimming *en papillon*, and so on, Troy resolved as a last resource to tread water at a slight incline, and so endeavour to reach the shore at any point, merely giving himself a gentle impetus inwards whilst carried on in the general direction of the tide. This, necessarily a slow process, he found to be not altogether so difficult, and though there was no choice of a landing-place—the objects on shore passing by him in a sad and slow procession—he perceptibly approached the extremity of a spit of land yet further to the left, now well defined against the sunny portion of the horizon. While the swimmer's eyes were fixed upon the spit as his only means of salvation on this side of the Unknown, a moving object broke the outline of the extremity, and immediately a ship's boat appeared, manned with several sailor lads, her bows towards the sea.

All Troy's vigour spasmodically revived to prolong the struggle yet a little further. Swimming with his right arm, he held up his left to hail them, splashing upon the waves, and shouting with all his might. From the position of the setting sun his white form was distinctly visible upon the now deep-hued bosom of the sea to the east of the boat, and the men saw him at once. Backing their oars and putting the boat about, they pulled towards him with a will, and in five or six minutes from the time of his first halloo, two of the sailors hauled him in over the stern.

They formed part of a brig's crew, and had come ashore for sand. Lending him what little clothing they could spare among them as a slight protection against the rapidly cooling air, they agreed to land him in the morning; and without further delay, for it was growing late, they made again towards the roadstead where their vessel lay.

And now night drooped slowly upon the wide watery levels in front; and at no great distance from them, where the shore-line curved round, and formed a long riband of shade upon the horizon, a series of points of yellow light began to start into existence, denoting the spot to be the site of Budmouth, where the lamps were being lighted along the parade. The cluck of their oars was the only sound of any distinctness upon the sea, and as they laboured amid the thickening shades the lamplights grew larger, each appearing to send a flaming sword deep into the waves before it, until there arose, among other dim sha kind, the form of the vessel for which they were bound.

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Three Feathers.

CHAPTER XII.

The Chain Tightens.

ONCE, and once only, Wenna broke down. She had gone out into the night all by herself, with some vague notion that the cold, dank sea-air—sweet with the scent of the roses in the cottage-gardens—would be gratefully cool as it came around her face. The day had been stormy, and the sea was high—she could hear the waves dashing in on the rocks at the mouth of the harbour—but the heavens were clear, and over the dark earth the great vault of stars throbbed and burned in silence. She was alone, for Mr. Roscorla had not returned from London, and Mabyn had not

noticed her slipping out. And here, in the cool, sweet darkness, the waves seemed to call on her with a low and melancholy voice. A great longing and trouble came somehow into her heart, and drove her to wander onwards as if she should find rest in the mere loneliness of the night, until at length there was nothing around her but the dark land, and the sea, and the white stars.

She could not tell what wild and sad feeling this was that had taken possession of her; but she knew that she had suddenly fallen away from the calm content of the wife that was to be—with all the pleasant sensation of gratitude towards him who had honoured her, and the no less pleasant consciousness that her importance in the world, and her power of helping the people around her, were indefinitely increased. She had become again the plain Jim Crow of former days, longing to be able to do some indefinitely noble and unselfish thing—ready, indeed, to lay her life down so that she might earn some measure of kindly regard by the sacrifice. And once more she reflected that she had no great influence in the world, that she was of no account to anybody, that she was plain, and small, and insignificant; and the great desire in her heart of being of distinct and beautiful service to the many people whom she loved seemed to break itself against these narrow bars, until the cry of the sea around her was a cry of pain, and the stars looked coldly down on her, and even God himself seemed far away and indifferent.

"If I could only tell some one—if I could only tell some one!" she was saying to herself wildly, as she walked rapidly onwards, not seeing very well where she was going, for her eyes were full of tears. "But if I tell Mabyn she will say that I fear this marriage, and go straight to Mr. Roscorla; and if I tell my mother she will think me ungrateful to him, and to every one around me. And how can I explain to them what I cannot explain to myself? And if I cannot explain it to myself, is it not mere folly to yield to such a feeling?"

The question was easily asked, and easily answered; and with much show of bravery she proceeded to ask herself other questions, less easily answered. She began to reproach herself with ingratitude, with vanity, with a thousand errors and evil qualities; she would teach herself humility; she would endeavour to be contented and satisfied in the position in which she found herself; she would reflect on the thousands of miserable people who had real reason to complain, and yet bore their sufferings with fortitude; and she would now—straightway and at once—return to her own room, get out the first letter Mr. Roscorla had written her, and convince herself once more that she ought to be happy.

The climax was a strange one. She had been persuading herself that there was no real cause for this sudden fit of doubt and wretchedness. She had been anticipating her sister's probable explanation, and dismissing it. And yet, as she turned and walked back along the narrow path leading down to the bridge, she comforted herself with the notion that Mr. Roscorla's letter would reassure her and banish these imaginary sorrows.

She had frequently read over that letter, and she knew that its ingenious and lucid arguments were simply incontrovertible.

"Oh, Wenna!" Mabyn cried, "what has been troubling you? Do you know that your face is quite white? Have you been out all by yourself?"

Wenna, on getting home, had gone into the little snuggery which was once a bar, and which was now George Rosewarne's smoking-room. Mabyn and her father had been playing chess—the board and pieces were still on the table. Wenna sate down, apparently a little tired.

"Yes, I have been out for a walk," she said.

"Wenna, tell me what is the matter with you!" the younger sister said, imperatively.

"There is nothing the matter. Well, I suppose you will tease me until I tell you something. I have had a fit of despondency, Mabyn, and that's all—despondency over nothing; and now I am quite cured, and do you think Jennifer could get me a cup of tea? Well, why do you stare? Is there anything wonderful in it? I suppose every girl must get frightened a little bit when she thinks of all that may happen to her—especially when she is alone—and of course it is very ungrateful of her to have any such doubts, though they mean nothing, and she ought to be ashamed——"

She stopped suddenly. To her dismay she found that she was admitting to Mabyn the very reasons which she expected to have to combat. She saw what she had done in the expression of Mabyn's face—in the proud, indignant mouth and the half-concealed anger of the eyes. The younger sister was silent for a minute; and then she said, passionately—

"If there's any one to be ashamed, it isn't you, Wenna. I know who it is. As for you, I don't know what has come over you of late—you are trying to be meeker and meeker, and more humble, and more grateful—and all for what? What have you to be grateful for? And you are losing all your fun and your good spirits; and you are getting to be just like the children in story-books that repeat texts and get gooder and gooder every day until they are only fit for Heaven, and I am sure I am always glad when the little beasts die. Oh, Wenna, I would rather see you do the wickedest thing in all the world if it would only bring you back to your old self!"

"Why, you foolish girl, I am my old self," the elder sister said, quietly taking off her bonnet and laying it on the table. "Is Jennifer up-stairs? Who is in the parlour?"

"Oh, your sweetheart is in the parlour," said Mabyn, with badly-concealed contempt. "He is just arrived from London. I suppose he is telling mother about his rheumatism."

"He hasn't got any rheumatism—any more than you have," Wenna said, with some asperity.

"Oh yes, he has," the younger sister said, inventing a diabolical story for the mere purpose of getting Wenna into a rage. She would

rather have her in a succession of tempers than the victim of this chastened meekness. "And gout too—I can see by the colour of his nails. Of course he hasn't told you, for you're such a simpleton, he takes advantage of you. And he is near-sighted, but he pretends he doesn't need spectacles. And I am told he has fearful debts hanging over his head in London, and that he only came here to hide; and if you marry him you'll see what will come to you."

Mabyn was not very successful in making her sister angry. Wenna only laughed in her gentle fashion, and put her light shawl beside her bonnet, and then went along the passage to the parlour in which Mr. Roscorla and her mother were talking.

The meeting of the lovers after their temporary separation was not an impassioned one. They shook hands; Wenna hoped he was not fatigued by the long journey; and then he resumed his task of describing to Mrs. Rosewarne the extraordinary appearance of Trelyon's sitting-room in Nolans's Hotel, after the young gentleman had filled it with birds and beasts. Presently, however, Wenna's mother made some pretence for getting out of the room; and Mr. Roscorla and his betrothed were left alone. He rarely got such an opportunity.

"Wenna, I have brought you the ring," said he; and with that he took a small case from his pocket, and opened it, and produced a very pretty gypsy ring studded with emeralds.

Now, on the journey down from London he had definitely resolved that he would put an end to that embarrassment or shamefacedness which had hitherto prevented his offering to kiss the girl whom he expected to marry. He was aware that there was something ridiculous in his not having done so. He reflected that scarcely any human being would believe that he could have been such a fool. And it occurred to him, in the train, that the occasion of his giving Wenna her engaged ring would be an excellent opportunity for breaking in upon this absurd delicacy.

He went across the room to her. She sate still, perhaps a little paler than usual. He took her hand, and put the ring on, and then——

Then it suddenly occurred to him that there was something devilish in the notion of his purchasing the right to kiss her by giving her a trinket. Not that any such scruple would otherwise have affected him; but he was nervously sensitive as to what she might think; and doubtless she was familiar with the story of Margarethe and Faust's casket of jewels. So he suddenly said, with an air of carelessness—

"Well, do you like it? You can't quite tell the colour of the stones by lamplight, you know."

Wenna was not thinking of the colour of the stones. Her hand trembled; her heart beat quickly; when she did manage to answer him, it was merely to say, in a confused fashion, that she thought the ring very beautiful indeed.

"You know," he said, with a laugh, "I don't think men like engaged rings quite as well as girls do. A girl generally seems to take such a fancy

for an engaged ring that she won't change it for any other. I hope that won't be in your case, Wenna; and, indeed, I wanted to talk to you about it."

He brought a chair close to her, and sate down by her, and took her hand. Now, ordinarily Wenna's small, white, plump hands were so warm that her sister used to say that they tingled to the very tips of her fingers with kindness, and were always wanting to give away something. The hand which Mr. Roscorla held was as cold and as impassive as ice. He did not notice: he was engaged in preparing sentences.

"You know, Wenna," said he, "that I am not a rich man. When I might have taught myself to work I had just sufficient income to keep me idle; and now that this income is growing less, and when I have greater claims on it, I must try something. Well, my partners and myself have thought of a scheme which I think will turn out all right. They propose to wake up those estates in Jamaica, and see if they can't be made to produce something like what they used to produce. That wants money. They have it: I have not. It is true I have been offered the loan of a few thousand pounds; but even if I accept it—and I suppose I must—that would not put me on an equal footing with the other men who are going into the affair. This, however, I could do: I could go out there and do all in my power to look after their interests and my own—see, in fact, that the money was being properly expended before it was too late. Now, I might be there a very long time."

"Yes," said Wenna, in a low voice, and rather inappropriately.

"Now, don't let me alarm you; but do you think—do you not think, in view of what might be rather a long separation, that we ought to get married before I go?"

She suddenly and inadvertently withdrew her hand.

"Oh, no, no, no!" she said, in a low and frightened voice. "Oh, do not ask me to do that."

She was trembling more than ever. He could not understand.

"But don't make any mistake, Wenna," he said; "I did not propose you should go with me. That would be asking too much. I don't wish to take you to the West Indies; because I might be there only for a few months. All I wish is to have the bond that unites us already made fast before I go, merely as a comfortable thing to think of, don't you see?"

"Oh, it is too hasty—I am afraid—why should we be in such a hurry?" the girl said, still with her heart beating so that she could scarcely speak.

"No," he argued, "you must not make another mistake. Before this scheme can be matured, months must elapse. I may not have to go out before the beginning of next year. Now, surely other six months would make a sufficiently long engagement."

"Oh, but the pledge is so terrible," she said, and scarcely knowing what she said.

Mr. Roscorla was at once astonished and vexed. That was certainly

not the mood in which a girl ought to look forward to her marriage. He could not understand this dread on her part. He began to ask himself whether she would like to enjoy the self-importance that her engagement had bestowed on her—the attentions he paid her, the assistance he gave her in her charitable labours, and the sort of sovereignty over a man which a girl enjoys during the betrothal period—for an indefinite time, or perhaps with the hope that the sudden destruction of all these things by marriage might never arrive at all. Then he began to get a little angry, and got up from the chair, and walked once or twice up and down the room.

"Well," said he, "I don't understand you, I confess. Except in this way, that our relations with each other have not been so openly affectionate as they might have been. That I admit. Perhaps it was my fault. I suppose, for example, you have been surprised that I never offered to kiss you?"

There was something almost of a threat in the last few words; and Wenna, with her cheeks suddenly burning red, anxiously hastened to say—

"Oh, not at all. It was my fault. I am sure if there was too great reserve it was my fault; but I do not think there has been. It is not that at all; but your wish seems so sudden, and so unnecessary."

"Don't you see," he said, interrupting her, "that if our relations at present are not sufficiently frank and confidential, nothing will mend that so easily as our marriage? And this that I ask of you ought to be as agreeable to you as to me—that is to say——"

He stopped, with a look of impatience on his face. There was some one coming along the passage. He knew who it was, too; for a young girl's voice was doing its best to imitate in a burlesque fashion a young man's voice, and Mr. Roscorla had already heard Harry Trelyon, as he rode or drove carelessly along, bawling to himself, "Oh, the men of merry, merry England!" He knew that his old enemy Mabyn was at hand.

That very clever imitation of Harry Trelyon was all the warning that the young lady in question condescended to give of her approach. She opened the door without ceremony, marched into the middle of the room, and proudly placed a bird-cage on the table.

"There," said she "can either of you tell me what that bird is?"

"Of course I can," said Wenna, rising with a sensation of great relief.

"No you can't," her sister said dogmatically. "It is sent to you with Mr. Harry Trelyon's compliments; and it is something very wonderful indeed. What is it, ladies and gentlemen? Don't answer all at once!"

"Why, it is only——

"A piping bullfinch—that's what it is," said Mabyn, triumphantly.

CHAPTER XIII.

An Unexpected Convert.

Next morning was Sunday morning; and Wenna, having many things to think over by herself, started off alone to church, some little time before the others, and chose a circuitous route to the small building which stood on the high uplands over the sea. It was a beautiful morning, still and peaceful, with the warmth of the sunlight cooled by a refreshing western breeze; and as she went along and up the valley, her heart gradually forgot its cares, for she was listening to the birds singing, and picking up an occasional wild-flower, or watching the slow white clouds cross the blue sky. And as she walked quietly along in this way, finding her life the sweeter for the sweet air and the abundant colour and brightness of all the things around her, it chanced that she saw Harry Trelyon coming across one of the meadows, evidently with the intention of bidding her good morning, and she thought she would stop and thank him for having sent her the bullfinch. This she did very prettily when he came up; and he, with something of a blush on his handsome face, said—

"I thought you wouldn't be offended. One can use more freedom with you now that you are as good as married, you know."

She quickly got away from that subject by asking him whether he was coming to church; and to that question he replied by a rather scornful laugh, and by asking what the parsons would say if he took a gun into the family pew. In fact, he had brought out an air-cane to test its carrying powers; and he now bore it over his shoulder.

"I think you might have left the gun at home on a Sunday morning," Miss Wenna said, in rather a precisé fashion. "And, do you know, Mr. Trelyon, I can't understand why you should speak in that way about clergymen, when you say yourself that you always avoid them, and don't know anything about them. It reminds me of a stable-boy we once had who used to amuse the other lads by being impertinent to every stranger who might pass, simply because the stranger was a stranger."

This was a deadly thrust; and the tall young gentleman flushed, and was obviously a trifle angry. Did she mean to convey that he had acquired his manners from stable-boys?

"Parsons and churches are too good for the likes o' me," he said, contemptuously. "'Morning, Miss Rosewarne," and with that he walked off.

But about three minutes thereafter, when she was peacefully continuing her way, he overtook her again, and said to her, in rather a shamefaced fashion—

"I hope you don't think I meant to be rude to you, Miss Wenna. I'll go to church with you if you like. I've stuck my air-cane in a safe place."

Wenna's face brightened.

"I shall be very glad," she said, with a smile far more frank and

friendly than any she had ever yet bestowed on him. "And I am sure if you came often to hear Mr. Trewhella, or if you knew him, you would think differently about clergymen."

"Oh, well," Trelyon said, "he's a good sort of old chap, I think. I find no fault with him. But look at such a fellow as that Barnes—why, that fellow's son was with me at Rugby, and wasn't he a pretty chip of the old block—a mean, lying little beggar, who would do anything to get a half-crown out of you."

"Oh, were you at Rugby?" Wenna asked, innocently.

"I don't wonder at your asking," her companion said, with a grin. "You think it doesn't look as if I had ever been to any school? Oh yes, I was at Rugby; and my career there, if brief, was not inglorious. I think the records of all the eight Houses might be searched in vain to find such another ruffian as I was, or any one who managed to get into the same number of scrapes in the same time. The end was dramatic. They wouldn't let me go to a ball in the Town-hall. I had vowed I should be there; and I got out of the House at night, and went. And I hadn't been in the place ten minutes when I saw the very master who had refused me fix his glittering eye on me; so as I knew it was all over, I merely went up to him and asked to have the pleasure of being introduced to his daughter. I thought he'd have had a fit. But that little brute Barnes I was telling you about, he was our champion bun-eater. At that time, you know, they used to give you as many buns as ever you liked on Shrove-Tuesday; and the Houses used to eat against each other, and this fellow Barnes was our champion; and, oh Lord! the number he stowed away that morning. When we went to chapel afterwards, he was as green as a leek."

"But do you dislike clergymen because Master Barnes ate too many buns?" Wenna asked, with a gentle smile, which rather aggrieved her companion.

"Do you know," said he, "I think you are awfully hard on me. You are always trying to catch me up. Here am I walking to church with you, like an angel of submission, and all the thanks I get——why, there goes my mother!"

Just in front of them, and a short distance from the church, the road they were following joined the main highway leading up from Eglosilyan, and along the latter Mrs. Trelyon's brougham was driving past. That lady was very much astonished to find her son walking with Miss Wenna Rosewarne on a Sunday morning; and still more surprised when, after she was in church, she beheld Master Harry walk coolly in and march up to the family pew. Here, indeed, was a revolution. Which of all the people assembled—among whom were Miss Mabyn and her mother, and Mr. Roscorla—had ever seen the like of this before? And it was all the greater wonder that the young gentleman in the rough shooting-coat found two clergymen in the pew, and nevertheless entered it, and quietly accepted from one of them a couple of books.

Mrs. Trelyon's gentle and emotional heart warmed towards the girl who had done this thing.

That forenoon, just before luncheon, Mrs. Trelyon found her son in the library, and said to him, with an unusual kindliness of manner—

"That was Miss Rosewarne, Harry, wasn't it, whom I saw this morning?"

"Yes," he said, sulkily. He half expected that one or other of his friends, the parsons, had been saying something about her to his mother.

"She is a very quiet, nice-looking girl; I am sure Mr. Roscorla has acted wisely, after all. And I have been thinking, Harry, that since she is a friend of yours, we might do something like what you proposed, only not in a way to make people talk."

"Oh," said he bluntly, "I have done it already. I have promised to lend Roscorla 5,000*l.* to help him to work his Jamaica estates. If you don't like to sanction the affair, I can get the money from the Jews. I have written to Colonel Ransome to tell him so."

"Now why should you treat me so, Harry?" his mother said, in an injured way.

"I took you at your word—that's all. I suppose now you are better disposed to the girl merely because she got me to go to church this morning. If there were more people like her about churches, in the pulpits and out of them, I'd go oftener."

"I was not quite sure who she was," Mrs. Trelyon said, with a feeble air of apology. "I like her appearance very much; and I wish she or anybody else would induce you to go to church. Well now, Harry, I will myself lend you the 5,000*l.* till you come of age. Surely that will be much better; and, if you like, I will make Miss Rosewarne's acquaintance. You might ask her to dinner the first time Mr. Roscorla is coming; and he could bring her."

Master Harry was at last pacified.

"Make it Thursday," said he, "and you must write to her. I will take down the letter and persuade her: but if she comes she shan't come under the wing of Mr. Roscorla, as if he were the means of introducing her. I shall go down for her with the brougham, and fetch her myself."

"But what will Mr. Roscorla say to that?" his mother asked, with a smile.

"Mr. Roscorla may say whatever he particularly pleases," responded Master Harry.

CHAPTER XIV.

"SIE BAT SO SANFT, SO LIEBLICH."

"To dine at Trelyon Hall?" said George Rosewarne to his eldest daughter, when she in a manner asked his consent. "Why not? But you must get a new dress, lass; we can't have you go among grand folks as Jim Crow."

"But there is a story about the crow that went out with peacock's feathers," his daughter said to him. "And, besides, how could I get a new dress by Thursday?"

"How could you get a new dress by Thursday?" her father repeated mechanically, for he was watching one of his pet pigeons on the roof of the mill. "How can I tell you? Go and ask your mother. Don't bother me."

It is quite certain that Wenna would not have availed herself of this gracious permission, for her mother was not very well, and she did not wish to increase that tender anxiety which Mrs. Rosewarne already showed about her daughter's going among these strangers; but that this conversation had been overheard by Mabyn, and that young lady, as was her habit, plunged headlong into the matter.

"You can have the dress quite well, Wenna," she said, coming out to the door of the Inn, and calling on her mother to come too. "Now, look here, mother, I give you warning that I never, never, never will speak another word to Wenna if she doesn't take the silk that is lying by for me and have it made up directly: never a single word, if I live in Eglosilyan for a hundred and twenty-five years!"

"Mabyn, I don't want a new dress," Wenna expostulated. "I don't need one. Why should you rush at little things as if you were a squadron of cavalry?"

"I don't care whether you want it or whether you don't want it; but you've got to have it, hasn't she, mother? Or else, it's what I tell you: not a word—not a word if you were to go down before me on your bended knees." This was said with much dramatic effect.

"I think you had better let Mabyn have her own way, Wenna," the mother said, gently.

"I let her!" Wenna answered, pretending not to notice Mabyn's look of defiance and triumph. "She always has her own way; tomboys always have."

"Don't call names, Wenna," her sister said, severely; "especially as I have just given you a dress. You'll have to get Miss Keane down directly, or else I'll go and cut it myself, and then you'll have Harry Trelyon laughing at you, for he always laughs at people who don't know how to keep him in his proper place."

"Meaning yourself, Mabyn," the mother said; but Mabyn was not to be crushed by any sarcasm.

Certainly Harry Trelyon was in no laughing or spiteful mood when he drove down on that Thursday evening to take Wenna Rosewarne up to the Hall. He was as pleased and proud as he well could be, and when he went into the Inn he made no secret of his satisfaction and of his gratitude to her for having been good enough to accept his mother's invitation. Moreover, understanding that Mrs. Rosewarne was still rather ailing, he had brought down for her a brace of grouse from a hamper that had reached the Hall from Yorkshire that morning; and he was even friendly

and good-natured to Mabyn instead of being ceremoniously impertinent towards her.

"Don't you think, Mr. Trelyon," said Wenna, in a timid way, as she was getting into the brougham, "don't you think we should drive round for Mr. Roscorla?"

"Oh, certainly not," said Mabyn, with promptitude. "He always prefers a walk before dinner—I know he does—he told me so. He must have started long ago. Don't you mind her, Mr. Trelyon."

Mr. Trelyon was grinning as he and Wenna drove away.

"She's a thorough good sort of girl, that sister of yours," he said; "but when she marries won't she lead her husband a pretty dance!"

"Oh, nothing of the sort, I can assure you," Wenna said, sharply. "She is as gentle as any one can well be. If she is impetuous, it is always in thinking of other people. There is nothing she wouldn't do to serve those whom she really cares for."

"Well," said he, with a laugh, "I never knew two girls stick up so for one another. Don't imagine I was such a fool as to say anything against her. But sisters ain't often like that. My cousin Jue has a sister at school, and when she's at home, the bullying that goes on is something awful; or rather its nagging and scratching, for girls never go in for a fair stand-up fight. And yet when you meet these two separately, you find each of them as good-natured and good-tempered as you could wish. But if there's anything said about you anywhere that isn't positive worship, why, Mabyn comes down on the people like a cart-load of bricks; and she can do it, mind you, when she likes."

It suddenly occurred to Mr. Trelyon that he had made a blunder; and whereas a more diplomatic young gentleman would have hastened away from the subject, hoping that she had not noticed it, he must needs hark back in a confused and embarrassed fashion.

"Of course," said he, with a laugh, "I didn't mean that anyone ever said anything really against you—that is impossible—that is quite impossible, and especially no one would say such a thing to me—at least they wouldn't say it twice, I can answer for that—you understand, I did not mean anything of that sort."

"Oh yes," Wenna said, quietly. "What a brilliant red those campions seem to have at this time of the evening when the green around them gets dark."

"Mind," he said, after a word or two, "I mean to take you in to dinner. It is just possible my mother may ask Mr. Roscorla to take you in, as a compliment to him; but don't you go."

"I must do what I am told," Wenna answered, meekly.

"Oh no, you mustn't," he said. "That is merely a girl's notion of what is proper. You are a woman now; you can do what you like. Don't you know how your position is changed since you became engaged?"

"Yes, it is changed," she said, and then she added quickly, "Surely that must be a planet that one can see already."

"You can be much more independent in your actions now, and much more friendly with many people, don't you know?" said this young man, who did not see that he was treading on very delicate ground, and that of all things in the world that Wenna least liked to hear spoken of, her engagement to Mr. Roscorla was the chief.

Late that night, when Wenna returned from her first dinner-party at Trelyon Hall, she found her sister Mabyn waiting up for her, and, having properly scolded the young lady for so doing, she sat down and consented to give her an ample and minute description of all the strange things that had happened.

"Well, you must know," said she, folding her hands on her knees as she had been used to do in telling tales to Mabyn when they were children together: "you must know that when we drove up through the trees, the house seemed very big, and grey, and still, for it was getting dark, and there was no sound about the place. It was so ghost-like that it rather frightened me; but in the hall we passed the door of a large room, and there I got a glimpse of a very gay and brilliant place, and I heard some people talking. Mr. Trelyon was waiting for me when I came down again, and he took me into the drawing-room and introduced me to his mother, who was very kind to me, but did not seem inclined to speak much to any one. There was no other lady in the room—only those two clergymen who were in church last Sunday, and Mr. Trewhella, and Mr. Roscorla. I thought Mr. Roscorla was a little embarrassed when he came forward to shake hands with me—and that was natural, for all the people must have known—and he looked at my dress the moment I entered the room; and then, Mabyn, I did thank you in my heart for letting me have it; for I had forgotten that Mr. Roscorla would regard me as being on my trial, and I hope he was not ashamed of me."

"Ashamed of you!" said Mabyn, with a sudden flush of anger. "Do you mean that *he* was on his trial?"

"Be quiet. Well, you must know, that Mr. Trelyon was in very high spirits, but I never saw him so good-natured, and he must needs take me in to dinner, and I sat on his right hand. Mrs. Trelyon told me it was only a quiet little family party; and I said I was very glad. Do you know, Mabyn, there is something about her that you can't help liking—I think it is her voice and her soft way of looking at you; but she is so very gentle and ordinarily so silent, that she makes you feel as if you were a very forward, and talkative, and rude person——"

"That is precisely what you are, Wenna," Mabyn observed, in her schoolgirl sarcasm.

"But Mr. Trelyon, he was talking to everybody at once—all round the table—I never saw him in such spirits; and most of all he was very kind to Mr. Trewhella, and I liked him for that. He told me he had asked Mr. Trewhella because I was coming; and one thing I noticed was, that he was always sending the butler to fill Mr. Trewhella's glass, or to offer him some different wine, whereas he let the other two clergymen

take their chance. Mr. Roscorla was at the other end of the table—he took in Mrs. Trelyon—I hope he was not vexed that I did not have a chance of speaking to him the whole evening; but how could I help it? He would not come near me in the drawing-room—perhaps that was proper, considering that we are engaged; only I hope he is not vexed."

For once Miss Mabyn kept a hold over her tongue, and did not reveal the thoughts that were uppermost in her mind.

"Well, after dinner Mrs. Trelyon and I went back to the drawing-room; and it was very brilliant and beautiful; but oh! one felt so much alone in the big place that I was glad when she asked me if I would play something for her. It was something to think about; but I had no music, and I had to begin and recollect all sorts of pieces that I had almost forgotten. At first she was at the other end of the room, in a low easy-chair of rose-coloured silk, and she looked really very beautiful, and sad, and as if she were dreaming. But by and by she came over and sat by the piano; and it was as if you were playing to a ghost, that listened without speaking. I played one or two of the 'Songs without Words'—those I could recollect easily—then Beethoven's 'Farewell;' but while I was playing that, I happened to turn a little bit, and, do you know, she was crying in a quiet and silent way. Then she put her hand gently on my arm, and I stopped playing, but I did not turn towards her, for there was something so strange and sad in seeing her cry that I was nearly crying myself, and I did not know what was troubling her. Then, do you know, Mabyn, she rose and put her hand on my head, and said, 'I hear you are a very good girl: I hope you will come and see me.' Then I told her I was sorry that something I had played had troubled her; and as I saw she was still distressed, I was very glad when she asked me if I would put on a hood and a shawl and take a turn with her round some of the paths outside. It is such a beautiful night to-night, Mabyn; and up there, where you seemed to be just under the stars, the scents of the flowers were so sweet. Sometimes we walked under the trees, almost in darkness, and then we would come out on the clear space of the lawn, and find the skies overhead, and then we would go into the rose garden, and all the time she was no longer like a ghost, but talking to me as if she had known me a long time. And she is such a strange woman, Mabyn—she seems to live so much apart from other people, and to look at everything just as it affects herself. Fancy a harp, you know, never thinking of the music it was making; but looking all the time at the quivering of its own strings. I hope I did not offend her; for when she was saying some very friendly things about me—of course Mr. Trelyon had been telling her a heap of nonsense—about helping people and that, she seemed to think that the only person to be considered in such cases was yourself, and not those whom you might try to help. Well, when she was talking about the beautiful sensations of being benevolent—and how it softened your heart and refined your feelings to be charitable—I am afraid I said something I should not have said, for she immediately turned

and asked me what more I would have her do. Well, I thought to myself, if I have offended her, it's done and can't be helped; and so I plunged into the very thing I had been thinking of all the way in the brougham ——"

"The Sewing Club!" said Mabyn; for Wenna had already spoken of her dark and nefarious scheme to her sister.

"Yes; once I was in it, I told her of the whole affair; and what she could do if she liked. She was surprised, and I think a little afraid. 'I do not know the people,' she said, 'as you do. But I should be delighted to give you all the money you required, if you would undertake the rest.' 'Oh no, madam,' said I (afterwards she asked me not to call her so), 'that is impossible. I have many things to do at home, especially at present, for my mother is not well. What little time I can give to other people has many calls on it. And I could not do all this by myself.'"

"I should think not," said Mabyn, rising up in great indignation, and beginning to walk up and down the room. "Why, Wenna, they'd work your fingers to the bone, and never say thank you. You do far too much already—I say you do far too much already—and the idea that you should do that! You may say what you like about Mrs. Trelyon—she may be a very good lady, but I consider it nothing less than mean—I consider it disgraceful, mean, and abominably wicked, that she should ask you to do all this work and do nothing herself!"

"My dear child," said Wenna, "you are quite unjust. Mrs. Trelyon is neither mean nor wicked; but she was in ignorance, and she is timid, and unused to visiting poor people. When I showed her that no one in Eglosilyan could so effectively begin the Club as herself—and that the reckless giving of money that she seemed inclined to was the worst sort of kindness—and when I told her of all my plans of getting the materials wholesale, and making the husbands subscribe, and the women sew, and all that I have told to you, she took to the plan with an almost childish enthusiasm, and now it is quite settled, and the only danger is that she may destroy the purpose of it by being over-generous. Don't you see, Mabyn, it is her first effort in actual and practical benevolence—she seems hitherto only to have satisfied her sense of duty or pleased her feelings by giving cheques to public charities—and she is already only a little too eager and interested in it. She doesn't know what a slow and wearisome thing it is to give some little help to your neighbours discreetly."

"Oh, Wenna," her sister said, "what a manager you are! Sometimes I think you must be a thousand years of age; and other times you seem so silly about your own affairs that I can't understand you. Did Mr. Roscorla bring you home?"

"No, but he came in the brougham along with Mr. Trelyon. There was a great deal of joking about the conquest—so they said—I had made of Mrs. Trelyon; but you see how it all came about, Mabyn. She was so interested in this scheme——"

"Oh yes; I see how it all came about," said Mabyn, quite contentedly. "And now you are very tired, you poor little thing, and I shan't ask you any more about your dinner-party to-night. Here is your candle."

Wenna was just going into her own room, when her sister turned and said—

"Wenna?"

"Yes, dear?"

"Do you think that His Royal Highness Mr. Roscorla condescended to be pleased with your appearance, and your manners, and your dress?"

"Don't you ask impertinent questions," said Wenna, as she shut the door.

CHAPTER XV.

A Leave-taking of Lovers.

Wenna had indeed made a conquest of the pale and gentle lady up at the Hall which at another time might have been attended with important results to the people of Eglosilyan. But at this period of the year the Trelyons were in the habit of leaving Cornwall for a few months; Mrs. Trelyon generally going to some continental watering place, while her son proceeded to accept such invitations as he could get to shoot in the English counties. This autumn Harry Trelyon accompanied his mother as far as Etretât, where a number of her friends had made up a small party. From this point she wrote to Wenna, saying how sorry she was she could not personally help in founding that sewing club, but offering to send a handsome subscription. Wenna answered the letter in a dutiful spirit, but firmly declined the offer. Then nothing was heard of the Trelyons for a long time, except that now and again a hamper of game would make its appearance at Eglosilyan, addressed to Miss Wenna Rosewarne in a sprawling schoolboy's hand, which she easily recognised. Master Harry was certainly acting on his own theory, that now she was engaged he could give her presents, or otherwise be as familiar and friendly with her as he pleased.

It was a dull, slow, and dreary winter. Mr. Roscorla was deeply engaged with his Jamaica project, and was occasionally up in London for a fortnight at a time. He had got the money from young Trelyon, and soon hoped to set out—as he told Wenna—to make his fortune. She put no obstacle in his way, nor yet did she encourage him to go; it was for him to decide, and she would abide by his decision. For the rest, he never revived that request of his that they should be married before he went.

Eglosilyan in winter time is a very different place from the Eglosilyan of the happy summer months. The wild coast is sombre and gloomy. The uplands are windy, and bleak, and bare. There is no shining plain of blue lying around the land, but a dark and cheerless sea, that howls in

the night time as it beats on the mighty walls of black rock. It is rather a relief, indeed—to break the mournful silence of those projecting cliffs and untenanted bays—when the heavens are shaken with a storm, and when the gigantic waves wash in to the small harbour, so that the coasters seeking shelter there have to be scuttled and temporarily sank in order to save them. Then there are the fierce rains, to guard against which the seaward-looking houses have been faced with slate; and the gardens get dank and wet, and the ways are full of mire, and no one dare venture out on the slippery cliffs. It was a tedious and a cheerless winter.

Then Mrs. Rosewarne was more or less of an invalid the most of the time, and Wenna was much occupied by household cares. Occasionally, when her duties indoors and in the cottages of her humble friends had been got over, she would climb up the hill on the other side of the mill-stream to have a look around her. One seemed to breathe more freely up there among the rocks and furze than in small parlours or kitchens where children had to be laboriously taught. And yet the picture was not cheerful. A grey and leaden sea—a black line of cliffs standing sharp against it until lost in the mist of the south—the green slopes over the cliffs touched here and there with the brown of withered bracken—then down in the two valleys the leafless trees, and gardens, and cottages of Eglosilyan, the slates ordinarily shining wet with the rain. One day Wenna received a brief little letter from Mrs. Trelyon, who was at Mentone, and who said something of the balmy air, and the beautiful skies, and the blue water around her; and the girl, looking out on the hard and stern features of this sombre coast, wondered how such things could be.

Somehow there was so much ordinary and commonplace work to do that Wenna almost forgot that she was engaged; and Mr. Roscorla, continually occupied with his new project, seldom cared to remind her that they were on the footing of sweethearts. Their relations were of an eminently friendly character, but little more—in view of the forthcoming separation he scarcely thought it worth while to have them anything more. Sometimes he was inclined to apologise to her for the absence of sentiment and romanticism which marked their intimacy; but the more he saw of her the more he perceived that she did not care for that sort of thing, and was, indeed, about as anxious to avoid it as he was himself. She kept their engagement a secret. He once offered her his arm in going home from church; she made some excuse, and he did not repeat the offer. When he came in of an evening to have a chat with George Rosewarne they talked about the subjects of the day as they had been accustomed to do long before this engagement; and Wenna sat and sewed in silence, or withdrew to a side-table to make up her account-books. Very rarely indeed—thanks to Miss Mabyn, whose hostilities had never ceased—had he a chance of seeing his betrothed alone, and then, somehow, their conversation invariably took a practical turn. It was not a romantic courtship.

He considered her a very sensible girl. He was glad that his choice was approved by his reason. She was not beautiful; but she had qualities that would last—intelligence, sweetness, and a sufficient fund of gentle humour to keep a man in good spirits. She was not quite in his own sphere of life; but then, he argued with himself, a man ought always to marry a woman who is below him rather than above him—in social position, or in wealth, or in brain, or in all three—for then she is all the more likely to respect and obey him, and to be grateful to him. Now, if you do not happen to have won the deep and fervent love of a woman—a thing that seldom occurs—gratitude is a very good substitute. Mr. Roscorla was quite content.

"Wenna," said he, one day after they had got into the new year, and when one had begun to look forward to the first indications of spring in that southern county, "the whole affair is now afloat, and it is time I should be too—forgive the profound witticism. Everything has been done out there; we can do no more here; and my partners think I should sail about the fifteenth of next month."

Was he asking her permission, or expecting some utterance of regret that he looked at her so? She cast down her eyes, and said, rather timidly—

"I hope you will have a safe voyage—and be successful."

He was a little disappointed that she said nothing more; but he himself immediately proceeded to deal with the aspects of the case in a most businesslike manner.

"And then," said he, "I don't want to put you to the pain of taking a formal and solemn farewell as the ship sails. One always feels downhearted in watching a ship go away, even though there is no reason. I must go to London in any case for a few days before sailing, and so I thought that if you wouldn't mind coming as far as Launceston—with your mother or sister—you could drive back here without any bother."

"If you do not think it unkind," said Wenna, in a low voice, "I should prefer that. For I could not take mamma further than Launceston, I think."

"I shall never think anything you do unkind," said he. "I do not think you are capable of unkindness."

He wished at this moment to add something about her engaged ring, but could not quite muster up courage. He paused for a minute, and became embarrassed, and then told her what a first-class cabin to Jamaica would cost.

And at length the day came round. The weather had been bitterly cold and raw for the previous two or three weeks; though it was March the world seemed still frozen in the grasp of winter. Early on this bleak and grey forenoon Mr. Roscorla walked down to the inn, and found the waggonette at the door. His luggage had been sent on to Southampton some days before; he was ready to start at once.

Wenna was a little pale and nervous when she came out and got into

the magnetic, but she busied herself in wrapping shawls and rugs and [illegible] her mother, who protested against being buried alive.

"Good-by," said her father, shaking hands with Mr. Hamilton [illegible], "I hope you'll have a fine passage. Wanna, don't forget to ask for those cartridges when you drive back from the station."

But Miss Wanna's method of bidding him farewell was far more emphatic. With an affectation of playfulness she offered him both her hands, and as, smiling quite too hard to hold a grip on the left hand of the unwedded man that had offended her much consideration, she said—

"Good-by. I hope you will get safely out to Jamaica."

"And back again!" said his other half.

Merry and smiling, turned away, and pretended to be examining the [illegible] of the magnetic. For all she spoke again to any one until the train had sunk down away, and then, when they had got over the bridge and along the valley, and up and over the hill, she suddenly ran to her father, flung her arms round his neck, kissed him, and cried out—

"Daddy! the train's moving again, and he'll never come back—never!"

"Hush," said her father, in a parenthesis. Meanwhile, as he stooped to pick up the broken pipe which she had caused him to let fall, "I wish we couldn't be heard so far."

But Merry was not to be crushed. She said, "Poor Daddy, has it broken his pipe?" and then she walked off, with her head very erect, and a very hungry light in her eyes, which she sent to herself, after the manner of the magnetic of Cuba, "Oh, he was a fancy, fancy England!"

There was the disappointment to this magnetic that was making the way across the Atlantic epitaph—a dull spot in the gray and watery distance. Wanna was really sorry that the long voyage, and all its [illegible] and anxieties, should be taken up by one who had been so kind to her; [illegible] a third of the going away into strange lands all by herself, with little of the dreaming, and enchantment, and anticipation of [illegible] to have been her. As for him, he was chiefly occupied during this [illegible] in [illegible] to convince himself that he was going [illegible] the world for his sake—as a younger man might have done—and then, [illegible], he gradually would be added to the [illegible] of the trip. It never passed him to imagine himself [illegible] the question. After all he was not a very elderly, and he was in very good preservation for his years. He was more than a match in [illegible], in [illegible], and in a knowledge of the world that ought to [illegible] him in good stead, for many a younger man who, with far less [illegible] of manner, was fond of making a fortune for the sake of some [illegible] girl.

The worst disappointed in me that he was sorry about his going away; [illegible] would never get over that. He had a wish that she should positively [illegible] in the character, we did he, indeed, believe that any sensible girl would do anything of the sort.

ime he had no fear whatever as to her remaining constant
ltogether out of the way of meeting marriageable young
der no temptation to let her fancies rove. Moreover,
ne had something to gain, in social position, by her
n, which she could not be so blind as to ignore; and
the inducement of waiting to see whether he might not
ne to her? But the real cause of his trust in her was
of her uncompromising sincerity and keen sense of
had acquired during a long and sufficiently intimate
e thought of her breaking her promise ever occurred to
a serious possibility, but as an idle fancy, to be idly

y silent," he said to her.

you are going away," she said, simply and honestly;
pleased and flattered him.

ve me courage," he said. "You ought to consider that
to the world—even at my time of life—to get a lot of
back to make a grand lady of you."

she in sudden alarm—for such a thought had never
—"I hope you are not going away on my account. You
for nothing of that kind. I hope you did not consider
go to Jamaica!"

rse, I considered you," said he, good-naturedly; "but
self; I should have gone if I had never seen you. But
n additional motive in going when I look at the future."
a pleasant thought for Wenna Rosewarne. It was not
her on stormy nights, when she might lie awake and
ship at sea. She had acquiesced in his going, as in one
hich men do because they are men and seem bound to
tion with results which women might consider unneces-
she should have exercised any influence on his decision
er with a new sense of responsibility, and she began to
l suddenly drop this project, have the waggonette turned
back to the quiet content and small economies and
Eglosilyan.

in good time at Launceston, and went for a stroll up to
ld castle while luncheon was being got ready at the hotel.
eem to regard that as a very enticing meal when they sat
talk was kept up chiefly by her mother and Mr. Roscorla
n shipboard, and the best means of killing the tedium
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carriage, which was empty, came nearer, the coachman touched his hat. "Perhaps she is coming back to the Hall to-day."

The words were uttered carelessly, for she was thinking of other things. When they at last stood on the platform and Mr. Roscorla had chosen his seat, he could see that she was paler than ever. He spoke in a light and cheerful way, mostly to her mother, until the guard requested him to get into the carriage, and then he turned to the girl and took her hand.

"Good-bye, my dear Wenna," said he. "God bless you! I hope you will write to me often."

Then he kissed her cheek, shook hands with her again, and got into the carriage. She had not spoken a word. Her lips were trembling—she could not speak—and he saw it.

When the train went slowly out of the station, Wenna stood and looked after it with something of a mist before her eyes, until she could see nothing of the handkerchief that was being waved from one of the carriage windows. She stood quite still, until her mother put her hand on her shoulder, and then she turned and walked away with her. They had not gone three yards, when they were met by a tall young man who had come rushing down the hill and through the small station-house.

"By Jove!" said he, "I am just too late. How do you do, Mrs. Rosewarne? How are you, Wenna?"—and then he paused, and a great blush overspread his face—for the girl looked up at him and took his hand silently, and he could see there were tears in her eyes. It occurred to him that he had no business there—and yet he had come on an errand of kindness. So he said, with some little embarrassment, to Mrs. Rosewarne—

"I heard you were coming over to this train, and I was afraid you would find the drive back in the waggonette rather cold this evening. I have got our landau outside—closed, you know—and I thought you might let me drive you over."

Mrs. Rosewarne looked at her daughter. Wenna decided all such things, and the girl said to him, in a low voice—

"It is very kind of you."

"Then just give me a second, that I may tell your man," Trelyon said, and off he darted.

Was it his respect for Wenna's trouble, or had it been his knocking about among strangers for six months, that seemed to have given to the young man (at least in Mrs. Rosewarne's eyes) something of a more courteous and considerate manner? When the three of them were being rapidly whirled along the Launceston highway in Mrs. Trelyon's carriage, Harry Trelyon was evidently bent on diverting Wenna's thoughts from her present cares; and he told stories, and asked questions, and related his recent adventures in such a fashion that the girl's face gradually lightened, and she grew interested and pleased. She, too, thought he was much improved—how she could not exactly tell.

"Come," said he, at last, "you must not be very lownhearted about a mere holiday trip. You will soon get letters, you know, telling you all about the strange places abroad; and then, before you know where you are, you'll have to drive over to the station, as you did to-day, to meet Mr. Roscorla coming back."

"It may be a very long time indeed," Wenna said; "and if he should come to any harm I shall know that I was the cause of it; for if it had not been for me, I don't believe he would have gone."

"Oh, that's all gammon!—begging your pardon," said Master Harry, coolly. "Roscorla got a chance of making some money, and he took it, as any other man would. You had no more to do with it than I had—indeed, I had something to do with it—but that's a secret. No; don't you make any mistake about that. And he'll be precious well off when he's out there, and seeing everything going smoothly, especially when he gets a letter from you, with a Cornish primrose or violet in it. And you'll get that soon now," he added, quickly seeing that Wenna blushed somewhat, "for I fancy there's a sort of smell in the air this afternoon that means spring-time. I think the wind has been getting round to the west all day; before night you will find a difference in the air, I can tell you."

"I think it has become very fresh and mild already," Wenna said, judging by an occasional breath of wind that came in at the top of the windows.

"Do you think you could bear the landau open?" said he, eagerly.

When they stopped to try—when they opened the windows—the predictions of the weather prophet had already been fulfilled, and a strange, genial mildness and freshness pervaded the air. They were now near Eglosilyan, on the brow of a hill, and away below them they could see the sea lying dull and grey under the cloudy sky. But while they waited for the coachman to uncover the landau, a soft and yellow light began to show itself far out in the west, a break appeared in the clouds, and a vast comb of gold shot shining down on the plain of water beneath. The western skies were opening up; and what with this new and beautiful light, and what with the sweet air that awoke a thousand pleasant and pathetic memories, it seemed to Wenna Rosewarne that the tender spring-time was at length at hand, with all its wonder of yellow crocuses and pale snowdrops, and the first faint shimmerings of green on the hedges and woods. Her eyes filled with tears—she knew not why. Surely she was not old enough to know anything of the sadness that comes to some when the heavens are cleared, and a new life stirs in the trees, and the world awakes to the fairness of the spring. She was only eighteen; she had a lover; and she was as certain of his faithfulness as of her own.

In bidding them good-bye at the door of the inn, Mr. Trelyon told them that he meant to remain in Eglosilyan for some months to come.

The Wartons.

The brothers Joseph and Thomas Warton were conspicuous figures among the men of letters who flourished under that most unliterary of monarchs, King George III. The elder was the Master of Winchester and Prebend of St. Paul's; the younger, who was also a clergyman, occupied the post held earlier in the century by his father, of Professor of Poetry. He was, moreover, Camden Professor of History, and succeeded Whitehead as Laureate. Both the brothers were Oxford men, and Thomas, who never married, resided at the University more than forty-seven years; both were small poets, Thomas being by far the better singer of the twain, both were poetical critics, both were men of high culture, but neither of them, it may be said, has left an ineffaceable mark in literature. The work they did is for the most part done well, but none of it supremely well, and the popularity they enjoyed among their contemporaries passed away with their lives. It is curious to note how little of biographical interest has come down to us about the Wartons. Their memoirs were written by learned but dull men, who did not know that the object of a biographer ought to be to produce a vivid and genuine representation of his hero; and thus, instead of giving us a finished portrait of the brothers, we find it scarcely possible to catch the outline of their features.

The Rev. John Wooll undertook, six years after Joseph Warton's death, to write the biography of his late friend and master, and to publish a selection from his works. Accordingly in 1806 appeared, after the fashion of those days, a bulky quarto volume, printed in admirable type, and with wide margins. To it we owe a few facts for which we are bound to be thankful, and at the same time it may be acknowledged that the writer's views of a biographer's duties are carried out in the most exemplary manner. "To descend," he says, "to the minutiæ of daily habits is surely beneath the province of biography," and he intimates at the same time that all letters of a domestic character are suppressed, and that the reader will be disappointed "should he expect a detail of those peculiarities and trifling incidents which are by some indiscriminately termed strokes of character." Wooll observes, and no doubt justly, that a good deal of injury may be inflicted on a man by his biographer; but he does not see that it is possible to deal gently and wisely with a person's weaknesses and foibles, and at the same time to produce a characteristic portrait.

Biographers have sinned frequently, no doubt, in trenching on sacred ground, but that is no reason why the memoir-writer should confine himself to the statement of a few barren facts. To know where a man lived, what

offices he filled, what books he wrote, who and how often he married, is not to know the man. Yet this is the principal information, useful no doubt in its way, supplied by the Rev. John Wooll. What of it is needful for us to state may be put into a few paragraphs.

Joseph, who came into the world six years before Thomas, and died ten years after him, was born in 1722, and educated at Winchester and at Oriel College, Oxford, where his skill as a poetaster appears to have been first exhibited. At the age of twenty-two he was ordained, and three years afterwards was presented by the Duke of Bolton to the rectory of Wynslade, when he married the lady to whom he had been for some time attached. The Duke expected a service in return for the favour he had conferred, and one which any clergyman worthy of the name would have declined with scorn. "In the year 1751," writes the biographer,

> Warton was called from the indulgence of connubial happiness and the luxury of literary retirement to attend his patron to the south of France, for which invitation the Duke had two motives: the society of a man of learning and taste, and the accommodation of a Protestant clergyman, who immediately on the death of his Duchess, then in a confirmed dropsy, could marry him to the lady with whom he lived, and who was universally known and distinguished by the name of Polly Peachum.

Wooll allows that the circumstances attendant on this expedition were "not the most eligible in a professional view," but praises Warton, notwithstanding, for his laudable wish to improve his income. The connection appears to have terminated abruptly, since, before reaching Italy, Warton left the Duke and his mistress and returned to England. Warton now produced his edition of *Virgil*, gaining thereby a considerable reputation for scholarship. In this edition he published Pitt's translation of the *Æneid* and attempted himself a translation of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* which proved that, though an elegant scholar, he was not a poet. Pitt's chief fault as a translator, says Mr. Connington, who of all modern critics was the best qualified to judge, "is a general mediocrity of expression. Warton was heavier and more prosaic than Pitt, without being much less conventional. His ear was worse, his command of poetical language more restricted. Yet he sighs in his dedication over the necessity of using coarse and common words in his translation of the *Georgics*, viz., *plough* and *sow*, *wheat*, *dung*, *ashes*, *horse*, and *cows*, &c., words which he fears will unconquerably disgust many a delicate reader. When Virgil rises Warton does not rise with him; his version of the '*Pollio*' and of the 'Praises of Italy' may be read without kindling any spark of enthusiasm."

He also wrote several papers for the *Adventurer*, a popular periodical, some of them containing, in the judgment of his biographer, inimitable criticisms on Shakspeare. Of these essays the best are devoted to critical topics; but it was asserted at the time, and not without justice, that Warton exhibited his learning too freely in a periodical designed for general reading. In some of the papers there is an attempt at humour, which in these days would be considered heavy. *Characters at Bath*

and *Letters of Six Characters* for instance, were no doubt regarded by the writer as lively, or even witty, but we suspect that they will strike the modern reader as dull and laboured pieces.

Thanks, perhaps, to his *Virgil*, Warton was elected second master of Winchester School, and while in this position produced the first volume of his ponderous *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, a quarter of a century passing before the publication of the second. Warton was a sound critic, with a just appreciation of some of the more subtle charms of poetry; but his method of criticism, like the method followed by his brother, is pedantic and obsolete.

Nothing but curiosity or a peculiar interest in the subject could induce anyone now-a-days to wade through the two volumes which contain his *Essay on Pope*. It forms an exhibition of the author's learning, a rather wearisome exhibition it must be owned; but it is only just to Warton to observe that Thomas Campbell thought otherwise, and pronounced the essay entertaining. Dr. Johnson also said, and said truly, that "he must be much acquainted with literary history, both of remote and late times, who does not find in this essay many things which he did not know before." It may be well, moreover, to remember that much which seems to us familiar and obvious in Warton's criticisms might not have been so evident when it was written.

The following passage, for instance, would very likely have struck Warton's first readers as original and suggestive; to readers in our day it will sound utterly trite, and yet not more trite than some passages on the same subject written more than seven years later by Macaulay * :—

> Correctness is a vague term, frequently used without meaning and precision. It is perpetually the nauseous cant of the French critics, and of their advocates and pupils, that the English writers are generally incorrect. If correctness implies an absence of petty faults, this perhaps may be granted. If it means that because their tragedians have avoided the irregularities of Shakespeare, and have observed a juster economy in their fables, therefore the *Athalia* for instance, is preferable to *Lear*, the notion is groundless and absurd. Though the *Henriade* should be allowed to be free from any very gross absurdities, yet who will dare to rank it with the *Paradise Lost* ?

In some respects both the Wartons broke up ground which has been since so well cultivated that we are apt to forget how much we owe to them. The very growth the two brothers endeavoured to stimulate has been injurious to their fame, and their criticism fails to impress us, not because it is intrinsically worthless but because we have outlived it. While

* We refer to the celebrated essayist's review of Moore's *Life of Lord Byron*, in which correctness in poetry is discussed at considerable length. It is probable that Macaulay's remarks were suggested, though perhaps unconsciously, by the observations of Warton. We have space only for one brief quotation :—"What is meant by correctness in poetry? If by correctness be meant the conforming to rules which have their foundation in truth and in the principles of human nature, their correctness is only another name for excellence. If by correctness be meant the conforming to rules purely arbitrary, correctness may be another name for dulness and absurdity."

doing justice to the critical school of poets, and giving due praise to the splendid satire and exquisite fancy of Pope, they asserted that the highest art of the poet could only be expressed by communion and sympathy with nature, and thus they may be regarded as pioneers in the great poetical revolution which gave a new character to our literature at the beginning of the century.

After spending eleven years at Winchester College as assistant master, Joseph Warton, on the resignation of Dr. Burton, was appointed head master, and held that position with singular honour for twenty-seven years. In the height of his prosperity his wife, "whom he still adored with unabated love," died, and left him "the wretched widowed parent of six children." This was in the month of October, 1772. In the following year the wretched parent found it necessary "to soothe his anguish by the admission of new comforts, and to curb the violence of unavailing and destructive regret," which means in plain English that fourteen months after the death of his first wife he resolved to marry a second.

The "Literary Club," of which Dr. Johnson was so proud, numbered Dr. Warton among its members, but his residence at Winchester made him no doubt an infrequent guest. His name, by the way, is rarely mentioned in Boswell's biography, and never, we believe, in connection with the club. Wooll, it is needless to observe, has little to say on the subject, for he evidently regarded it as trifling with the dignity of biography to describe the daily actions or associations of his hero. He does, however, condescend to tell us that Warton spent his Christmas vacation every year in London, tempted by the pleasures of London society and "the rich allurement of the Literary Club. An ardour for military knowledge was a prominent feature in the family character, and it was no uncommon circumstance to see Dr. Warton at breakfast in the St. James's Coffee-house surrounded by officers of the Guards, who listened with the utmost attention and pleasure to his remarks." From the biographer also we learn—and one ought to feel obliged to him for admitting such insignificant particulars—that Warton was a lover of children and a great admirer of beauty. Mr. Wooll writes that he has often seen "the young, the handsome, and the gay deserted by the belles to attract the notice of Dr. W.; whilst he was on his part thoroughly accessible, and imparted his lively sallies and instructive conversation with the most gallant and appropriate pleasantry." A few additional facts may also be gathered from the memoir. The biographer, for instance, is good enough to inform us that Warton lost a son in 1786; that four years later he lost his brother, to whom he was warmly attached; that it was not until the evening of life he obtained church preferment; that in the summer of 1793 he resigned his post at Winchester; that four years later he produced his edition of Pope in nine volumes; that "he entered on an edition of Dryden," and "was proceeding in his classical and interesting pursuit," when he died in the seventy-eighth year of his age. The editicn of Pope, which ought perhaps to have been Warton's most significant achievement, may be well nigh regarded as an

utter failure. What is good in it is simply a republication of what was in the Essay; his fresh matter is for the most part irrelevant and commonplace.

Unfortunately, too, for his reputation the late Master of Winchester, and Prebend of Winchester and St. Paul's, thought fit to reprint a disgusting chapter of Scriblerus, omitted in all good editions of Pope, which he considered "full of the most exquisite original humour;" and a piece equally offensive, entitled the *Double Mistress*, which is also praised by him for its "inimitable humour." This was a sin against decency, and, considering Warton's age and position, it is difficult to excuse him. Even his biographer does not attempt to do so. Neither Warton's conduct in early life nor in old age appears to have been marked by lofty principle. He was an amiable, kind-hearted man, willing to live on the best terms with his associates, but he had not the religious earnestness, the self-abnegation, the entire devotion to his work, evident in some clergymen. By him probably the church was viewed as a profession rather than a calling, while his chief interest was in literature. It is clear that he liked good cheer and lively company, and spent his days in an easy, comfortable sort of way, without allowing his complacency to be disturbed by theological difficulties. When an old man we are told that "his parsonage, his farm, his garden, were cultivated and adorned with the eagerness and taste of undiminished youth," and that his lively sallies of playful wit, his rich store of literary anecdote, and the polished and habitual ease with which he imperceptibly entered into the various ideas and pursuits of men in different situations and endowed with educations totally opposite, rendered him an acquaintance both profitable and amusing; whilst his unaffected piety and unbounded charity stamped him a pastor adored by his parishioners." This sounds a little like the conventional style of panegyric permitted to biographers; and without any lack of charity we may venture to say that if Dr. Joseph Warton was "adored" by his parishioners, the feeling was called forth by his liberality rather than by his virtues as a pastor. The letters of a man will sometimes supply an index to his character. Warton's are few in number, and, for the most part, without colour. In one of them he writes of spending two evenings with Fielding and his sister, and of being "inexpressibly diverted;" in another, for the insertion of which the writer makes a kind of apology, we read of the loss of a "dear little charming girl" in consequence of inoculation; in a third, of a visit to Mason the poet, "the most easy, best-natured, agreeable man I ever met with," and to Matlock Bath, "of all earthly places the most exquisite and romantic." In another letter he relates that he dined with Dr. Johnson, who seemed cold and indifferent; and of Goldsmith he expresses an unfavourable and, as we must believe, an unkindly opinion. "Of all solemn coxcombs, Goldsmith is the first; yet sensible, but affects to use Johnson's hard words in conversation." A letter from Brighton, written about a century ago, also contains one or two noteworthy passages.

After stating that he never misses bathing in any weather, and that he has dined with *the* physician of the town, he adds: "We have, amidst other strange characters, a *bathing divine*, perpetually clad in silks and satins, and solely employed in playing cards with the purring dowagers and superannuated old maids." To this slight sketch of Joseph Warton's career it may be added, since it speaks well for the esteem in which he was held, that some of the most notable men of the age were among his friends or correspondents—Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Sir W. Blackstone, and Bishop Lowth, for example. The esteem, moreover, in which he was held, both as a scholar and a critic, was so great that we are not surprised to find Cowper writing to S. Rose: "If you should happen to fall into company with Dr. Warton again, you will not, I daresay, forget to make him my respectful compliments, and to assure him that I felt not a little flattered by the favourable mention he was pleased to make of me and of my labours. The poet who pleases a man like him has nothing left to wish for."

We have said that Dr. Warton was himself a poetaster as well as a critic of poetry, and his biographer ventures to assert that one of the striking beauties of his verse is originality. He could scarcely have made a greater blunder. Whatever excellence may be found in Joseph Warton's poetry is essentially imitative. He writes because others have written, not because he is constrained to write. His versification is skilful, and respectability—an odious word when applied to poetry—is its most prominent feature. It is hard to find fault considering the style of verse acceptable in that age; but it is more difficult to praise, and when Wooll points out, as he does occasionally, some passage deserving of special approbation, he exhibits his utter incompetence as a critic of poetry. When, for example, the poet (save the mark!), in a fit of melancholy, proposes to go "to charnels and the house of woe,"

> Or to some abbey's mouldering towers,
> Where to avoid cold wintry showers
> *The naked beggar shivering lies,*

the editor observes in a note that the line we have marked by italics "is not only an original but wonderfully poetical idea." Like his brother, Joseph Warton gathers much of his imagery from Milton, and there are marks, too, in his poetry that Thomson was appreciated. Indeed, readers unfamiliar with those masters might be inclined sometimes to call their imitator a very pretty poet, and so he would be if his choicest passages were not stolen, or, to speak of them less offensively, echoes of familiar song. Read, for instance, the "Ode to Fancy," one of his best pieces, and you will find that the poem constantly recalls the imagery and versification of Milton. The piece, indeed, is vastly unlike, and it need scarcely be said immensely inferior to the "L'Allegro" or "Il Penseroso"; at the same time lines occur again and again which suggest, if they do not actually copy, the lines of Milton. Not always, however,

and we readily admit Warton's originality when he imagines himself; stealing a kiss from his Laura—

> While her ruby lips dispense
> Luscious nectar's quintessence!

Yet he instantly falls again into the copyist, and adds his hope that Fancy may aid him,

> When young-eyed Spring profusely throws
> From her green lap the pink and rose,
> When the soft turtle of the dale
> To summer tells her tender tale.

Tawdry ornament and conventional phraseology mark many of his pieces; his lines abound in compound words and in the vicious diction so common at that period of our poetical history, when poets were afraid of treating plain subjects in plain language. At the same time it is evident that Joseph Warton strove in his measure (and his brother made a like effort more successfully) to leave the school of Pope for that of nature. The effort, however, was too much for so weak a poet, and he only partially succeeded. There is not a poem written by the elder Warton that has or deserves to have a place in our Anthologies.

The poetry of Thomas Warton is better known, and has been reprinted in two or three modern editions; but his chief reputation, like his brother's, is due to his learning and taste as a poetical commentator. The account of his singularly uneventful life is as meagre as that given of his brother. He was born at Basingstoke in 1728, and is said to have exhibited very early an extraordinary love of study. His education was conducted by his father till he went up to Oxford, where, in his sixteenth year, he was admitted a Commoner of Trinity College. Soon afterwards he was elected a Scholar. His thoughts and aspirations were not confined to college learning. While still a youth in his teens he published a poem called the *Pleasures of Melancholy*, and two years later, the *Triumph of Isis*. Mason, the friend of Gray, had written an elegy, called *Isis*, in which he lamented the degenerate state of Oxford; and young Warton, eager to defend his *alma mater*, produced his *Triumph* in reply—a highly creditable production considering the writer's age—which secured him at the time considerable applause. Several more poems followed which attracted some attention, while the publication of his *Observations on the Faery Queene*, in 1753, called forth the generous praise of Dr. Johnson. "You have shown," he wrote, "to all who shall hereafter attempt the study of our ancient authors, the way to success, by directing them to the perusal of the books which these authors had read."*

* *Apropos* of Warton and the "Faery Queene," there is a story told by Boswell in his *Life of Johnson* of a dispute about Spenser's great poem, between Thomas Warton and Huggins, the translator of Ariosto, in which the latter exclaimed, "I will *militate* no longer against his *nescience*." "Huggins," so writes Boswell, "was master of the subject, but wanted expression; Mr. Warton's knowledge of it was then imperfect, but his manner lively and elegant. Johnson said, 'It appears to me

The plan chosen by Thomas Warton has been frequently adopted since his day, and was again employed by him in his edition of Milton's early poems. We are not sure that it may not produce, in some cases, a false estimate of a poet. It is comparatively easy to multiply parallel passages and to show how far a great writer has gleaned or appears to have gleaned from his predecessors; but such labour is seldom satisfactory, since it seems to detract from his originality, while it exhibits the acuteness and comprehensive knowledge of the commentator. We should be slow to accuse any illustrious poet of plagiarism. If he borrow thoughts, he knows how to ennoble them, and the rough ore, as it passes through his hands, is changed into a piece of exquisite workmanship. In the *Life of Johnson* several letters will be found addressed by him to the Wartons. For both of them he appears to have entertained a sincere affection. Johnson, however, sneered at Thomas Warton's poetry, and Warton had no great opinion of Johnson's taste or scholarship. Thus an estrangement was produced between them which Johnson, it is said, lamented with tears in his eyes. At one time the intimacy was considerable, and Thomas Warton gives a pleasant account of a visit to Oxford made by Johnson the first time after quitting the University. Often they took long walks together into the country, returning to supper. "On one occasion," Thomas Warton writes, "as we returned to Oxford in the evening, I out-walked Johnson, and he cried '*Sufflamina*!' a Latin word, which came from his mouth with peculiar grace, and was as much as to say, *Put on your drag chain.*" The most interesting letters written by Johnson to the Wartons relate to the poet Collins—"poor dear Collins," he calls him, for he was then in a pitiable state of mental dejection. Collins won the love of the brothers and of the great critic who afterwards attempted to write his life, but none of them understood his rare genius as a lyrical poet. "As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved," wrote his biographer, "so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure." It would seem, too, that Gray, notwithstanding his fine taste, did not appreciate Collins, for he classed Collins and Warton together as writers of Odes, and said, "It is odd enough, but each is the half of a considerable man, and one the counterpart of the other. They both deserve to last some years, but will not."

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that Huggins has ball without powder, and Warton powder without ball.'" The Rev. Charles Rogers, LL.D., Historiographer of the Royal Historical Society, in his *Annotations on the Common-place Book of James Boswell*, recently published, transcribes a corresponding passage from the Journal, in complete ignorance of the remarks contained in the *Life*, and apparently unaware that such a man as Thomas Warton ever existed, for he spells the name *Wharton*—which it is just possible may have been an act of carelessness on Boswell's part—and is then good enough to inform us, in a note, that Thomas, Marquess of Wharton, a vigorous supporter of William of Orange, and familiarly known as Tom Wharton, composed the celebrated "Lillibullero," held high offices of state under Queen Anne and George I., and died in 1713!—an amusing complication of blunders which would not be forgiven in a sixth-form boy!

Gibbon called Oxford the headquarters of "port and prejudice," and Thomas Warton, who made it his home, imbibed, it is to be feared, a considerable quantity of both. Free thought disturbed him, and the lax opinions uttered by Milton on ecclesiastical questions ruffled the serene calm of his orthodoxy. Possibly the extreme temperance of the Puritan poet was equally hateful to him. A poet who needed neither wine nor ale to stimulate his inspiration was scarcely after Warton's heart. There is indeed no proof that he ever drank to excess, but he was a lover of conviviality, and there are intimations which show pretty clearly that his habits were to say the least rather loose and undignified. He was a modest man, or, as a friend once described him, "the most under-bearing man existing," and was averse to the society of strangers, "particularly those of a literary turn." It is stated also that he was fond of drinking his ale and smoking his pipe with persons of mean rank and education. And here it may not be amiss to mention another curious trait in his character. George Selwyn, as Rogers tells us, never missed "being in at a death at Tyburn," so delighted was he in seeing executions. Thomas Warton had the same taste, and it is said that at a time when he did not wish to be discovered he went to an execution disguised as a carter. He was also fond of military spectacles, and, in common with his brother, enjoyed the society of soldiers.

Warton held the Poetry Professorship for the usual term of ten years, and is said to have delivered lectures remarkable for eloquence of diction and justness of observation. Later on in life he was elected Camden Professor of History, but, after giving an inaugural address, appears to have thought he had sufficiently fulfilled the duties of the office. The truth seems to be that Warton, although capable of working hard at times, liked to work in his own way. He had long fits of comparative idleness, and, like Coleridge, his promises far exceeded his performance. Lord Eldon, remembering him as a college lecturer, exclaimed: "Poor Tom Warton! at the beginning of every term he used to send to his pupils to know if they would wish to attend lectures." He projected a translation of *Apollonius Rhodius*, a volume of criticism on Spenser's minor poems, and other books of comment or translation. Such projects, if fulfilled, would probably have had little interest for the modern reader; but every one must lament that Warton's great work, the only work of his which still retains a place in literature, the *History of English Poetry*, was never brought to a conclusion.

Pope and Gray, it will be remembered, thought of writing such a history, and both these poets made plans of the projected work. There is a friendly letter from Gray on the subject in which he relates his scheme and puts it at Warton's disposal. The method suggested, which was based on that of Pope, is to range the poets under different schools; but Warton found this plan impracticable, and elected to pursue his work chronologically. The student of poetry will find in it much to interest him and much also to cause disappointment. Southey praises the *His-*

tory highly, but not perhaps extravagantly, when he writes: "Two works which appeared in the interval between Churchill and Cowper promoted beyond any others this growth of a better taste than had prevailed for the hundred years preceding. These were Warton's *History of English Poetry* and Percy's *Reliques*, the publication of which must form an epoch in the continuation of that history." On the other hand, the book is marked by no artistic quality. It is full of errors; the narrative, in the judgment of one of Warton's editors, is eminently slipshod; materials are to be found in abundance, but there is no arrangement, no proportion; and the author, notwithstanding great labour and extensive research, has therefore failed to produce a work which we read with willingness and pleasure.

The reader who takes up the latest and most elaborate edition of Warton's *History*, namely, that produced by Mr. Hazlitt, will be amused or irritated to observe how often the text is contradicted by the notes *variorum*. Warton opens his first volume with a dissertation "On the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe;" and before commencing it the reader will learn from Mr. Wright that Warton's theories are "founded on a confusion of ideas as well as on the absence of a large knowledge of the subject." Ritson, whose abstinence from animal food cannot be said to have improved his temper, attacked Warton at all times with his accustomed sharpness and irascibility, and commences his comments on the essay by contradicting Warton's first sentence. Another critic, less likely to be influenced by prejudice, observes that the whole of the dissertation is extremely illogical and unsatisfactory, that the author's leading position respecting the influence of Arabic literature in Europe is unsound, and that most of the proofs which he alleges are matters which require proving themselves. All this may be perused before the reader has finished a single page of the text; and indeed he may be inclined to ask whether, supposing these judgments be correct, it is worth his while to read the essay at all. Let him take courage. In spite of errors, some of which may be imputed to the state of learning in Warton's day, and some to his consummate laziness—for it will be found that he often failed even to verify his quotations—the remarks on Romantic Fiction contain a good deal of information that is interesting and suggestive. Higher praise, perhaps, may be given to the third essay, "On the Introduction of Learning into England," which abounds in instructive statements. If many of them are familiar to the well-educated reader, he will remember that they were not generally familiar to Warton's contemporaries; and this remark should be borne in mind throughout the perusal of the *History*. Unfortunately, it is but the fragment of what might have been a really great work, and the portion of it that might be expected to have proved most interesting never saw the light. In one respect, as Mr. Stopford Brooke has pointed out, the book expressed a feeling which was unknown to the school of Pope. With that school the present was so powerful that it filled all the view. "Thomas Warton's *History of English Poetry*

was but the beginning of that vivid delight in what our forefathers did, to which Chatterton afterwards gave a fresher life, and which runs through all the minor poets of the time."

The wearisome and by no means wholly satisfactory labour bestowed by Thomas Warton on Spenser and Milton has been expended on his own poems by Bishop Mant. In his edition of the poetical works almost every couplet is annotated; and so copious are the notes and illustrations that very frequently thirty or forty lines of closely-printed letter-press follow three or four lines of text. Such ponderous toil is thrown away upon a small poet like Warton. Who cares to know whether or not some poetical fancy expressed by him has been previously expressed by an earlier and greater writer? A poet like Milton, if he use the thoughts of other men, transforms them and ennobles them, so that they become as it were a part of himself. Warton's verses recall in every page passages from the Greek and Roman classics, and from our own poets; but Warton is an imitator, and cannot make them his own by the transmuting power of genius. His taste is, for the most part, correct, his feeling sincere, his knowledge extensive, his skill in the manipulation of verses considerable. Add to these merits a genuine love of natural objects, which is all the more worthy of note since the poets of highest repute in his day rarely looked out of doors, and we have given Warton all the praise to which he is entitled as a poet.

His descriptive passages—witness the "Lines written in Whichwood Forest," and the "Ode on the Approach of Summer"—are good, and would deserve higher praise were it not that they resemble so closely the early poems of Milton. When he attempts a subject demanding pathos or passion he does not rise above the mediocrity of the versemaker—witness his ode entitled the "Suicide," which, however, we are bound to say has received the highest praise from his biographer. In this piece, which Dr. Mant calls the most popular of Warton's poems (alas! for popularity, we wonder how many of our readers have ever heard of it), we are told that an appeal is made to the heart as well as to the fancy, and that "the most striking poetical imagery is not only clothed with the most expressive diction, but heightened by the tenderest sentiments." After a careful and repeated perusal of the poem we confess that the "striking poetical imagery" does not strike us, and that the "expressive diction" appears to us laboured and conventional. One of the best specimens of Warton's work as a lyric poet is an ode called the "Grave of King Arthur." It is written in the octo-syllabic metre which Scott made so famous thirty years later, and there are passages in the poem which may even remind us of the "Ariosto of the North." Take, for instance, the following lines. Henry II. on his road through Wales to suppress a rebellion in Ireland is entertained with the songs of the Welsh bards.

Illumining the vaulted roof
A thousand torches flamed aloof;
From massy cups, with golden gleam
Sparkled the red metheglin's stream;

To grace the gorgeous festival
Along the lofty windowed hall
The storied tapestry was hung;
With minstrelsy the rafters rung
Of harps that with reflected light
From the proud gallery glittered bright;
While gifted bards, a rival throng,
From distant Mona, nurse of song,
From Teivi fringed with umbrage brown,
From Elvy's vale and Cader's crown,
From many a shaggy precipice
That shades Ierne's hoarse abyss,
And many a sunless solitude
Of Radnor's inmost mountains rude;
To crown the banquet's solemn close
Themes of British glory chose.

Between the minds of Warton and Scott it may be possible to trace a likeness. In one department, says his biographer, Warton is not only unequalled, but original and unprecedented—namely, "in applying to modern poetry the embellishment of Gothic manners and Gothic art; the tournaments, and festivals, the poetry, music, painting, and architecture of elder days." In this respect, therefore, he to some extent anticipated Scott; but Scott took possession of a region of which Warton knew comparatively little, and upon which, indeed, he did scarcely more than set his foot.

It is not much praise to say of Thomas Warton that in his Laureate odes he succeeded better than many of his predecessors, or than his immediate successor, than Tate or Cibber, than Whitehead or Pye; but it is a dreary task to read them, and it is amusing to contrast his earnest asseverations that the flattery of kings is distasteful to him with the glowing panegyrics which he heaps upon his "sacred sovereign" George III. Nothing could well be more false than the following lines, since this highly respectable monarch, as all the world knows, cared as little for the arts, and did as little to promote them, as William III.:—

'Tis his to bid neglected genius glow,
And teach the royal bounty how to flow.
His tutelary sceptre's sway
The vindicated arts obey,
And hail their patron king.

With equal absurdity he declares, as if with a noble love of independence, that he spurns Dryden's "panegyric strings," and then adds, that if Dryden had lived in his day—that is to say, under the blessed sway of George III.—flattery would have been impossible:—

The tuneful Dryden had not flattered here;
His lyre had blameless been, his tribute all sincere.

This, however, was the style of the day; and of Warton it may be said that, in his capacity of Laureate, he did tolerably what nobody could do well. When Warton died, Lady Hesketh wished to get the Laureateship

for Cowper, but the Olney poet declined the offer. "Heaven guard my brains," he wrote, "from the wreath you mention, whatever wreath beside may hereafter adorn them. It would be a leaden extinguisher clapped on all the fire of my genius, and I should never more produce a line worth reading." Cowper's words, true enough in his day, and especially true as coming from a man of his sensitive disposition, will not apply now. Thomas Warton is considered by Hallam a very competent judge of Latin poetry. His Latin poems are written with elegance, and the like praise may be fairly given to his English poems; but elegance is the result of culture and scholarship rather than of genius. During the time that Warton was winning reputation as a man of letters and as a poet, there lived a peasant in Scotland, unknown or uncared for apparently by the Oxford Professor, who gave higher proofs of poetical genius in a single song than Warton in all the verse he ever produced. The fruit of high culture may be found in the poetry of Thomas Warton; the fruit, how far more delightful and refreshing we need not say, of genuine poetical inspiration is given to us in the poetry of Burns.

The Sonnet was not in favour among the poetical critics of the eighteenth century. Dr. Johnson was incapable of seeing any beauty in the noble sonnets of Milton; George Steevens, who took high rank in the last century among the commentators of Shakspeare, declared that nobody would ever read Shakspeare's sonnets unless forced to do so by Act of Parliament. Bishop Mant was the contemporary of Johnson and Steevens, and it is not therefore surprising that he should show a like contempt for this species of poetry, which, he observes, is foreign to the genius of the English language. Of Warton's sonnets, he remarks that they are as good as sonnets generally are, by which he implies of course that they are not good for much. The truth is, however, that if Warton's memory as a poet be preserved at all, it will be due to two or three of the sonnets his biographer and critic despises. One of them, written on a blank leaf of Dugdale's *Monasticon*, has been termed by Charles Lamb of first-rate excellence, and of others Coleridge has spoken in warm commendation.

Warton lived at Oxford the idle-busy life of a literary *dilettante*, and the chief variations from the smooth tenor of his University career appear to have been little country excursions and visits to his brother at Winchester. To judge from the following anecdote he was ever a boy at heart, and had none of the "buckram" which he detected and disliked so much in the poet Mason:—

"During his residence at Winchester he was fond of associating with his brother's scholars; indeed, he entered so heartily into their sports and employments as to have been occasionally involved in rather ludicrous incidents. Being engaged with them in some culinary occupation, and alarmed by the sudden approach of Dr. Warton, he has been known to conceal himself in some dark corner, and has been drawn out of his

hiding-place to the no small astonishment and amusement of the Doctor, who had taken him for some great boy. He would assist the boys in making their exercises, generally contriving to accommodate his composition to the capacity of him whom he was assisting. 'How many faults?' was a question the answer to which regulated him; and a boy was perhaps as likely to be flogged for the verses of Mr. Warton as for his own." Then we are told that on one occasion Dr. Warton, suspecting his brother's hand in some exercise, asked him if he did not consider it worth half-a-crown. Thomas Warton assented. "'Well, then, you shall give the boy one.' Our author accordingly paid the half-crown for his own verses, and the Doctor enjoyed the joke." There is little more to be said about Thomas Warton, except to add the very pleasing fact, recorded by an acquaintance of more than forty years, that he had never, during the whole of that time, seen him out of humour; that he spent a great part of his income in charitable acts; that he loved children, and was humane to the brute creation; and that his conduct was uniformly marked by gentleness and humility. He grew fat as he advanced in years, thanks, perhaps, to his beloved Oxford ale, and Johnson declared that his manner of speaking resembled the gobble of a turkey-cock; but Johnson, be it remembered, said very ill-natured things sometimes, even of his friends, and it is possible this was said when his friendship for Warton had reached the freezing point. In the University, notwithstanding the want of some qualities which belong, or are supposed to belong, to the character of an Oxford Professor, he appears to have gained the esteem of his colleagues; and when he died, in 1790, his funeral was attended, not only by the members of his own college, but by the Vice-Chancellor, Heads of Houses, and Proctors at their own particular request.

The learned brothers, as we have intimated before, cannot be properly estimated without a knowledge of the literary atmosphere that surrounded them. There can be no doubt they helped forward the work so nobly accomplished by the great poets who flourished at the beginning of this century. Joseph Warton, while doing justice to the brilliant genius of Pope, proved clearly, what no critic in our time would dream of questioning, that Pope's place is not in the front rank of our poets. Thomas Warton, by his comments on Spenser and Milton, did his uttermost to lead back the eighteenth-century reader to those great masters of poetry, and, by the publication of his *History*, showed the student how much there is worthy of patient study to be found in early English literature. These were no light labours, and were of inestimable service at a time when, with one or two illustrious exceptions, our poets or versemen were content to utter jingling platitudes in carefully measured lines.

J. D.

Feudal China.

That China is stereotyped, is what Mr. Matthew Arnold would call a "stock phrase;" and, as our laureate has embalmed it in his melodious verse, we fear the stock phrase itself is securely stereotyped in English literature. "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay," does not indeed assert any incomparable superiority for our western conditions of life, when we happen to be familiar with the Chinese cycle of plain prose, a definite period of just half a century plus ten years. The poet, however, could not be expected to know that the dwellers in far Cathay were civilised enough to employ an astronomical cycle of sixty years as an ordinary method of dating their letters and documents. No doubt he meant to laud the constant progress of our western world, spinning along grooves of change with an ever-widening purpose, by contrasting with it the proverbial stagnation of a phlegmatic race, which, if it moves at all, moves in a narrow circle, aptly typified by their own heavy buffaloes slowly trampling round their sugar-mills in their old hoof-marks. But is it the fact that the inventive capacity of the Chinese is so dull, and its admiration of the past so profound, that for three or four thousand years they have done nothing but hash up the broken fragments of primeval ideas, and reproduce the forms of their earliest national life? This much of justification we must allow for the stereotyped notion that the rate of progress in China has not been so rapid as in Europe, and that its development has been more continuous, never breaking away so completely from the old, nor entering upon such entire novelty of conditions as we are familiar with in European history. The Europe of Agamemnon, the Europe of Augustus, and the Europe of Bismarck present to our view such immense differences, both of superficial aspect and deep down in the roots of national and individual life, that it is difficult to realise that three such distinct eras are actually merely different stages of development of the same common humanity. To us the times of the Tudors appear distant antiquity; the dark ages are the chaotic birth-era of our modern nationalities. As for all anterior history, it hardly seems to belong to the same race. We cannot say the same of China. There no glacial period established a marked break between any two portions of its history. China has known her cataclysms, but none of them separates between her past and her present as the irruption of the barbarians into the Roman Empire separates modern Europe from the age of the Antonines. The same barbaric hordes which ravaged the fields of Gaul and thundered at the gates of Rome, almost at the same time over-

whelmed the Chinese Empire, and founded a new dynasty in its capital. But the force of the waves of barbaric invasion which rolled over China once and again was never powerful enough to uproot the foundations of the national life; and when the floods subsided, the people continued to build on the old lines.

In comparing the rate of progress in Europe and China, we have to take into account another important distinction. Our development is the result of the interfusion of diverse types of civilisation. We inherit the intellectual wealth, the accumulated experience, of Judæa, Greece, and Rome, besides those of the more remote civilisations of Western Asia and Egypt. China has been comparatively a stranger to the intermixture of nations and of races. Her development is almost entirely of home growth; and, therefore, no wonder if the rate of progress has not been so rapid, nor its fruits so rich, as those that we have gathered from a hundred shores. Yet for all that we make such apologies for China, we are not about to plead guilty on her behalf to the charge of being stereotyped. The real ground of that charge is not her stagnation, but our ignorance. A notion has got abroad that in the far East, as it was in the beginning so it is now; that the China of Mr. Wade is almost identical with the China of Marco Polo, and that the China of Marco Polo was equally similar to that of Confucius. Such a notion implies not only ignorance but want of reflection; for, before investigation, it is quite incredible that a great nation should exist for three milleniums learning nothing, altering nothing, losing nothing. But in truth if that venerable Chinese sage could now revisit the glimpses of the moon, and wander among the scenes of his former life, he would probably feel himself as utterly bewildered by the new aspect of affairs as would Peter the Great among ourselves. We have mentally assumed that the Chinese men always wore pig-tails, that their women always squeezed up their pretty feet, and then been astonished at the amazing persistency of fashion in China, being ignorant that both these queer customs are of a date which is modern compared with the length of Chinese history. We admire or ridicule the system of making Government appointments the rewards of successful competition in literary examinations, under the impression that it has been an established practice from time immemorial, although the ancient sages and rulers of China never conceived the notion of such a proceeding, the scheme having been first introduced under the T'ang dynasty during the later half of Chinese history. We should not accuse the Chinese of stagnation in religious thought if we were aware that ithin historical times new religions have sprung up at home and been introduced from abroad, and that they passed through centuries of bitter controversy and fierce persecution before their jealous rivalry calmed down to the recent latitudinarian mutual tolerance. In philosophy it is easy to imagine that they have made no advances while the great name of Choo He has hardly been heard of in the West. In poetry Li t'ac peh and So tung peh are as far removed from the Classic of Ancient Poetry as Horace and Anacreon from Ennius and Homer. We

cannot assert that there is nothing new in literary criticism, when a distinguished scholar of the Han Lin College, in a work only published a few years back, is found disputing the ancient and almost sacred tradition that Confucius composed the Ch'un Ts'ew. As for political revolutions, wars, invasions, rebellions, changes of dynasties, the history of China teems with them; and the people themselves, so far from being aware of their stereotyped condition, are at the present time living in continual expectation of another turn of the political kaleidoscope. China will remain stereotyped to our popular imagination only so long as we preserve our profound ignorance of the vast amount of internal activity which has been at work within her borders for ages.

A concise but graphic history of China is a desideratum. The obstacle in the way is the immense amount of material extant in a language peculiarly difficult of acquisition, and out of the ordinary route of orientalists. Some thousands of volumes must be explored, sifted, and arranged before any one could make a decent pretence at composing a general history of the Chinese empire. Sinologues are paving the way for the great undertaking; and recently a splendid contribution to the work has been made by a translation into English of the most important and interesting, historically considered, of the classical, quasi-sacred, books of ancient China. This book* gives us the text and translation of the Ch'un Ts'ew, popularly attributed to Confucius, and of the Tso Chuen, or notes and supplements, from the hand of one of his followers. In this compilation we possess the beginning of contemporary history in China, extending from B.C. 721 to 463; and we have adopted a suggestion of the learned translator by calling the period to which it relates the feudal age of China. One must not press the phrase too hard, as we have no distinct account of the tenure on which the great nobles held their domains; but the resemblance between the condition of China at that time, parcelled out into ten or a dozen large principalities, and an unascertained number of smaller baronies, and the political state of feudal Europe in the middle ages, is quite sufficient to justify our distinguishing it as feudal China. It brings prominently forward the fact that China was not then the political unity and absolute monarchy which it afterwards became, and continued, though not without interruptions, from that day to this. Of this period of China's history the Ch'un Ts'ew covers two centuries and a half, anterior to the Peloponnesian war, and the conquest of Veii by the Romans; and of this far-away age we read here accounts so abundant, so minute, so vivid in incident and rich in colouring, that one might almost imagine special correspondents were abroad in those days, and that our historian had compressed his narrative out of snippings from the newspapers. One may safely say, with these records before him, that we have materials in hand for a history of China, probably more complete and reliable than can be constructed out of existing memorials of any other nation in the world during

* *The Chinese Classics*, vol. v., by James Legge, D.D., LL.D. Trübner & Co.

the same period. We do not owe this boon to Confucius. His portion, if indeed it was in any sense his, consists merely of a bare transcript of, or excerpts from, the public archives of his native state, Loo, and is no better than the naked skeleton of history. Each of the feudal states maintained its official historiographer, whose duty it was to chronicle the great events of each month of the year. A line or a line and a half sufficed, noting down the date of a coronation, a marriage, a treaty, or a battle. It was the commentator Tso who took these dry bones and clothed them with the flesh and blood of humour, thought, and action, and decked them out, like another Froissart, in all the elaborate attire and ceremonial of the time, until they pass in a life-like drama before our eyes. His chronicles, too, are perfectly trustworthy. Mistakes there may be, and, for aught we know, here and there are occasional misrepresentations; but no one can peruse the whole work without feeling satisfied of its substantial accuracy and fidelity.

Under penalty of being accused of harping too long on one string, we must just recur to our opening remarks by noticing the striking dissimilarity between the China of the Ch'un Ts'ew and the China known to us through British merchants and diplomatists. For one thing, no one could turn over these pages without being inclined to exclaim, "What a fighting set those ancient Chinese were!" We have been used to regard the Chinese, only with more reason, with Napoleon's contempt for a nation of shopkeepers. In addition to a keenness for gain and shrewdness at a bargain, which might teach something to the Jew and the Yankee, we give them credit for a pedantic scholarship and a fussy formal politeness, more troublesome than admirable. We are candid enough to admit they possess the virtues of domestic affection, sobriety, and plodding industry. But who would dream of encountering the heroic virtues of a military race among these bow-and-arrow warriors? Without staying now to discuss how far the popular impression of Chinese cowardice is true, and how much of it is to be attributed to their disparity of weapons and discipline in their encounters with our red-coats and blue-jackets, we may observe that the contempt we bestow upon their want of courage they themselves are inclined to bestow upon the military art and its professors. In modern China the military officer must yield the precedence to the civilian. Literature and philosophy confer a glory not to be acquired in the pursuit of arms.

In the Ch'un Ts'ew period all this is reversed. Captain Sword then held the first place, and Captain Pen had to wait a thousand years for the time when competitive examination should deliver the government of the empire into his hands. These feudal princes of Chow were almost always at war with one another, and sometimes, though more rarely, with their sovereign. Let us take at haphazard a year's record in the annals before us. It is the fifth year of Duke Hwan, B.C. 706:—"1. In the Duke's fifth year in spring, in the first month, Paou, Marquis of Ch'in, died. 2. In summer, the Marquis of Ts'e and the Earl of Ch'ing went to Ke.

The King sent the son of Jing Shuh to Loo with friendly inquiries. 4. There was the burial of Duke Hwan of Ch'ing. 5. We walled Chuh-Kew. 6. In autumn, an army of Ts'ae, an army of Wei, and an army of Ch'in followed the King and invaded Ch'ing. 7. There was a grand sacrifice for rain. 8. There were locusts. 9. In winter, the Duke of Chow went to Ts'aou." We have happened upon a year rather below the average in military expeditions. True, there was more fighting than one would infer from the text, for our commentator Tso tells us that the third entry refers to an attempt which was made to surprise the city of Ke. This attempt alarmed Loo, we are told, and led to the fortification of the city recorded in the fifth entry. So that three records out of nine are warlike. But in many years every other line is a battle or a siege.

Tso gives an interesting description of the gallant struggle of the little earldom of Ch'ing against the royal forces and their allies. The earl drew up his men in squares, as our great duke did at Waterloo. Each square contained twenty-five chariots, each chariot supported by five files of five men each. The square therefore consisted of fourteen hundred and fifty men. The total of Ch'ing's army is not given, a piece of information generally omitted in these narratives. But the army was marshalled in the orthodox way, having a centre and right and left wings. The earl strictly charged his squares not to move until they saw his flag wave, and then to advance with drums beating and fall upon the foe. The moment came, and the Ch'ingites charged the king's allies, who could not stand the shock, but broke and fled. The three divisions then made a combined attack on the royal army, which received a great defeat; the king himself being wounded by an arrow in the shoulder. The earl was overawed by his own success, and stopped the pursuit, for reverence for the royal dignity was still strong enough to make him shrink from the reputation of having not only defeated, but captured or slain, his liege lord. This narrative is brief; but some of Tso's descriptions of battles cover two or three pages, and we find abundant indications that the states of the Chow dynasty were no novices in the art of war. Yet the primitive age of war in which the personal prowess of the individual warrior was almost as effective in deciding the battle as the skill of the general had not wholly gone by. We read again and again of the exploits of doughty chieftains who signalised their strength and valour in many a tough conflict. One incident is peculiarly interesting because the hero was no other than the father of the great sage Confucius. Shuh Leang Heih was one of a band which attempted to surprise a strongly fortified place, by the common expedient of getting the gate opened to admit a waggon-load of provisions. But, once in, the attacking party found themselves in a trap, for the townsmen were ready in force, and behind them the portcullis was being lowered. Heih, who was possessed of extraordinary strength, sprang back and held up the portcullis with both hands, keeping his post until the storming party was safe outside.

The war-chariots give quite an Homeric flavour to these battle-pieces.

Cavalry appear never to have been employed, but the chiefs led their hundreds or thousands of chariots, drawn by four horses abreast, to the field, each of which carried three men—the charioteer in the centre, a bowman on his left, and a spearman on his right. When two armies were encamped opposite to each other, hesitating to begin the decisive battle, sometimes a chariot went out to flout the enemy, and provoke him to the fray. On one occasion three gallant warriors drove up to the camp of Tsin; the archer shot an arrow into the camp, the spearman entered, slew his man, and cut off his ear as a trophy, carried another bodily away, while the charioteer coolly dusted his horses and arranged the harness. The soldiers of Tsin could not stand this insolence, and their chariots were quickly in pursuit in two divisions. Yoh Peh, the archer, kept them in check by shooting horses and drivers right and left, until he had but one arrow left. At that moment a stag bounded up from the forest, and crossed right before his chariot. Yoh Peh shot the animal with his last arrow, and the spearman, Sheh Shuh, descended from the chariot, took up the venison, and politely offered it to the foremost pursuer, with the remark, "It is out of season, but I venture to present this to feast your followers." Paou Kwei, of Tsin, was struck by the cool gallantry of the deed, and stopped the pursuit; so the chariot returned in safety. There was no lack of courage among these buff-coated warriors. Here is an account of a desperate fight between Tsin and Ts'e. The signal to advance was given by beating a drum in the commander-in-chief's chariot, which also bore his flag. Early in the fight the general of Tsin was wounded by an arrow, but he continued beating the drum till the blood ran down his shoes, when he began to waver. His charioteer said, "I have had one arrow through my hand, and another through my arm; but while one of us three is alive to hold the reins this chariot must go forward. The eyes and ears of the army are on our flag and drum." He then held the reins in his left hand and beat the drum with his right. The well-trained steeds rushed on, and that day the Tsinites gained a great victory.

There was a chivalry about these old soldiers, a boldness of speech and fidelity to their word, which contrast strongly with our idea of the modern Chinaman. The Marquis of Tsin was for long a refugee in Ts'oo, until at last there seemed an opening for his return. Tsin and Ts'oo were rivals contending for the supremacy which was dropping from the feeble hands of the royal house of Chow. Some advised the viscount of Ts'oo not to permit the marquis to return, lest it should be the worse for Ts'oo, when so able a man governed the rival state. The viscount invited the exiled marquis to a banquet, and in the course of conversation, asked, "Suppose you were seated on your ancestral throne, and war broke out between Tsin and Ts'oo, what would you do?" The other replied, "If our forces were face to face in hostile array, in remembrance of your kind hospitality, and permitting me to regain my rights, I would retire before you for three marches. If after that you persisted in your wish to manœuvre with me, I would not refuse to submit to your commands." The plain English of

this polite phrase is, "If you want to fight, I'll be ready for you." Years after, when the quondam exile was a mighty prince, war arose between Tsin and Ts'oo. The marquis did not forget his promise. Thrice he retired before his enemy. Ts'oo pressed on, and then the marquis turned and inflicted on his old host a crushing defeat. This is but one among many instances of the display of a lofty nobility of spirit among the ancestors of the arrogant but pusillanimous Chinese whom we know.

In the Ch'un Ts'ew period fighting was the serious business of life for the noble and his retainers at least, but the wearer of the peaceful toga sometimes attained a worthier fame than any captain renowned in arms. The civil government was evidently regarded with great seriousness, even reverence, as a sacred office in which the welfare of the people ought to be the first object. Those dukes and earls were most of them licentious and cruel tyrants, and frequently they found prime ministers who played jackal to their masters' tiger. But it was not always so. Among the civil magistrates there were those who displayed a calm courage in rebuking or remonstrating with their despotic masters and a heroic readiness to die for their principles, which outvie the rude valour of the warrior tribe. We read in this book very little about the divine right of kings, though that was an article of their creed; but much about the divine duty of kings. Some of these councillors dared to tell their lords of their faults in plain speech. Others lay in wait for a suitable opportunity. Such an one was Gan-tsze of Ts'e. He was a trusty servant to the Duke of Ts'e, and one day the duke said to him, "Your house is too near the market. The noise and dust must annoy you. Besides, it is too small. I will build you a better one." Gan-tsze declined the offer on the plea that what was good enough for his father was good enough for him; "besides," said he, "it is so convenient to live near the market, I can always get what I want easily." The duke laughingly rejoined, "Of course you know the prices of things, then. Tell me what is cheap and what is dear." Gan-tsze replied, "Shoes for people whose toes have been cut off are dear, but other shoes are cheap." Cutting off the toes was one of the forms of punishment in Ts'e, and this duke was so severe in inflicting it that there were persons who sold shoes specially made for the toeless.

Gan-tsze's reply set the duke thinking, and from that time he diminished the severity of his judgments. Afterwards, however, he took advantage of Gan-tsze's absence on an embassy to erect a fine mansion for him, to make room for which he pulled down some houses of the common people, and of course without going through the formality of getting an Act of Parliament passed, and providing compensation for the evicted proprietors. Gan-tsze came back, and learnt what was done. He went to court, reported his mission, and returned thanks for the ducal favour in presenting him with so splendid an abode. He then went home, had the new house rased to the ground, rebuilt the dwellings which had stood on the site, and reinstalled their inhabitants. A fine character was Gan-tsze, and one feels inclined to shake hands with him

across the ages, and tell him how much we admire him. Tsze-chan, whom we mentioned in a former number as the butt of Leih-tsze's wit, was one of the noblest of these upright ministers; but his story would take too long.

Many interesting particulars of old Chinese life may be gathered from these pages. Some features of society then were repulsively cruel. Punishments were barbarous. The practice of interring living persons with the dead at the funerals of great men was not unknown, though it seems not to have been common. We find no traces of idolatry, but a simple form of monotheism, combined with the worship of the spirits of nature and of deceased ancestors, prevailed. Details of their daily life are abundant. We learn that they were fond of music and of chess. There is quite a detailed account of the formation of a fire-brigade in one city—perhaps the earliest organised precaution against fire ever undertaken. And, strange to say, amid this medley of fighting lords and barons, an enthusiastic precursor of the Peace Society started an attempt to put down war, and effect universal peace, by the establishment of a congress and court of appeal for all the states; and he met with much encouragement too in high quarters, and gained a great though short-lived fame. We promise any one who is daring enough to face the formidable-looking Chinese characters arrayed in solid columns in the text, and scattered up and down in the notes of Dr. Leggo's translation, and patient enough to thread the story from page to page, that he will find an abundant reward in the pleasure of becoming acquainted with a new and most interesting chapter of the world's history.

F. S. T

Agathe Marron:
The Story of a New Caledonian Deportée.

I.

On April 28, 1871, the Communal insurrection of Paris had been lasting one month and ten days; and on the night of that 28th a frightful artillery combat took place, which resulted in the defeat of the insurgents, and was the first signal of their final overthrow, which came to pass four weeks later. At seven o'clock in the evening the batteries established by the Versailles troops on the heights of Meudon, the Plateau of Chatillon, and the Moulin de Pierre opened a raking fire on Forts Issy and Vanves and the bastions at the city gates of Vanves and Vaugirard. It was like a deluge of flame and iron which fell on those doomed points. The resistance offered by a rabble soldiery, ill-officered, insubordinate, and mostly the worst for wine, was at first wild, and by-and-by slackened hopelessly, then ceased. At midnight Fort Vanves was reduced to silence; and Fort Issy, become a heap of ruins, was precipitately abandoned by its garrison, headed by the notorious Mégy. The rebel artillerymen, infantry, and the men employed as sappers to dig trenches, fled in disorder, leaving their guns, and throwing away rifles, shovels, pickaxes, and ammunition, to run the faster. Most of them bawled that they had been betrayed; and the valour of their commander, who was galloping away on a grey horse, unheeding his men, and concerned only about his own safety, was not calculated to dispel that notion. Mégy was a convict who had been sentenced to penal servitude for life, under the Empire, for having murdered a police detective, but had been released after the Revolution of September 4. He was as queer a character as any to be found in the herd of self-seeking mountebanks who were then flaunting the banner of social regeneration in Paris.

Meanwhile, the success of the Versailles artillery enabled Generals de Cissey and Faron to make a double attack at daybreak on the Farm of Bonnemy and the Park of Issy, which the dismantled forts had protected. Conducted with great spirit, the two attacks were victorious. At Bonnemy, the rebels, dislodged at the bayonet's point, lost 30 men and 2 officers killed and 75 made prisoners; at Issy an hour's fighting got the better of 2,000 Communalists, who lost 300 killed, 100 prisoners, 8 pieces of artillery, 4 wagon-loads of stores, and 8 horses. As usual, the survivors fled pell-mell, one company being mixed with another, and the officers making no attempt to rally their men or control them. In such plight, by squads of ten and twenty, exhausted, panic-stricken, and

mutinous, the defeated trudged homewards through the gates of Vanves and Vaugirard, where a great crowd of women, street-boys, and desultory sight-seers, alarmed by the night's cannonading, had collected to stare at them. It was not a martial sight, for the dusty and scarified vanquished looked far from heroic. But on crossing the gates, behind which they were for the present safe, the bombast inseparable from Parisian nature returned to most of them, and they began to brag aloud of having been pitted against overwhelming odds—of having inflicted enormous losses on the enemy, and of having been forced to retreat only through the incompetency of their chiefs. Some declined to admit that they were retreating, and crowed victory—all which drew cries of admiration and condolence from the women and *gamins* who had relatives engaged in the insurrection; and murmurs of sympathy from those who, without actually siding with the Commune, were yet growing to feel that involuntary interest which ends by moving all witnesses of a prolonged and seemingly brave struggle. Now, among the spectators who thus poured out charitable words from the superfluity of good, but foolish, hearts were one M. Marron and his daughter Agathe.

M. Marron was about sixty-two years old, and measured five feet two, not counting his hat, which was taller and had a broader brim than the shortness of his stature warranted. He was dressed in a brown coat, buttoned up to his chin, wore grey doeskin gloves mended at the finger-tips, and carried a thick bamboo cane with an ebony knob, chipped by thirty years' use. Every now and then, whether it were hot or cold, M. Marron removed his hat to mop his forehead with a check handkerchief, and at such moments he revealed a head bald as an ostrich-egg, but decked at the base with a fringing of white hair which joined itself over his ears to a pair of bushy grey whiskers running all under his double chin. His upper lip was carefully shaved, his cheeks were pink and pudgy, his eyes prying but unintelligent, and he looked on the whole like an honest garrulous simpleton—one of those born *badauds* who must needs stop to see a dog run over, a drunkard picked up, or a placard pasted on a hoarding, and who will always fall into conversation with bystanders about the novel incident.

It was not to be wondered at, however, that common sights should excite great curiosity in M. Marron, for he had spent forty years of his life copying letters in a Government office, where sights of any sort are rare. From ten o'clock till four on three hundred days in every one of these forty years M. Marron had sat writing in a hand like copperplate that his Excellency Monsieur So-and-so (the name of the Excellency changed every six months in times of order, every six weeks in periods of Republicanism) declined to interfere in this or that matter. M. Marron had nothing to do with the letters in which his Excellency agreed to interfere. He belonged to the negative branch of his department; and, by dint of answering "No" indiscriminately to all sorts of reasonable and unreasonable applications, he had gradually acquired the notion that

Government was an institution which politely, but firmly, declined to do its duty under any circumstances whatever. This had in nowise diminished his respect for Government—rather the contrary; and his loyalty reached an acute pitch when, at the age of sixty, he was superannuated on a pension of 1,200 francs.

This pension had fallen to him shortly before the Franco-German War. M. Marron had then for some years past been a widower, and lived on a third floor in the ancient Rue de Fleurus, with his daughter Agathe and an old maid-of-all-work. He had economised on his salary as a clerk, and his savings, added to his pension and to a small income drawn from the dower of his wife, afforded him in all about 200*l.* a-year, and placed him on a snug footing among the brother clerks with whom he had been in the habit of playing dominoes regularly every night at the Café de Fleurus. If peace had continued, or if France had vanquished Germany, M. Marron would have settled down into the humdrum existence of the small French *rentier*, and would have been a happy man. In summer he would have taken his daughter to see the people play at bowls in the Luxembourg; in winter he would have gone with her the round of all the museums and gratis amusements. Politics, other than those derived from that most conservative organ, the *Constitutionnel*, would have remained to him a sealed book; and he would have set his one ambition on marrying his Agathe to some well-behaved young man who would have relieved him of half his 200*l.*, but have given him in return a dinner every Sunday.

Unfortunately the war broke out, and the stirring incidents that followed laid M. Marron under a strain of excitement greater than his homespun mind could bear. A revolution, the siege of Paris, the outcry of clubs, the ravings of newspapers, and that "great voice of the people" which was launching the accusation of treason against every man who held a prominent post—all these things unhinged the beliefs which had guided the even tenor of the clerk's ways. He ceased to feel reverentially towards the powers who had employed and pensioned him; he doubted whether his own merits had received justice at their hands; and by the time the Commune supervened the iron of perplexity had so entered his soul that it had become as a ploughed field, open to all the seeds of discontent and folly which ignorant or mischievous hands were scattering broadcast.

Yet M. Marron did not at first approve the Commune, and it was only by imperceptible degrees that he came to reflect how much less happy he had been in times past than he had all along thought. For a while he battled against the dawning conviction, for the Rue de Fleurus was not well swept under the Commune, and the continual tooting of insurgent bugles awoke him at nights, which was unsatisfactory. But when he was assured that the streets would be well swept again, if the Commune prevailed; and when some café enthusiasts dangled before him the prospect of a general righting of human grievances, M. Marron began to ponder that perhaps his pension might be doubled. Social regeneration usually

presents itself to individuals under some such form as this; and M. Marron was not the only man by many who fancied that two armies of 100,000 men were arrayed against each other that he might draw 2,400 francs a year instead of 1,200.

So on the morning of April 28, having quaked in his bed all night through the horrible din of artillery, M. Marron stood at the Vaugirard gate, mopping his brow with his check handkerchief, and uttering audible comments as the routed soldiery hurried by him. After his wont, he talkatively apostrophised the person nearest him—a vinous citizen, in a soiled *kepi* and uniform, who had evidently taken no part in the fighting, but was now leaning against a post, smoking a short pipe, and watching the runaway procession with a sneer.

"The cannonading this night was the fiercest I have heard," said M. Marron, affably, to this person. "I counted thirty-three discharges in one minute, and neither my daughter nor I nor our servant could obtain a wink of sleep, could we, Agathe?"

Mdlle. Agathe made a little pout, because of the tobacco-smoke which the dusky citizen was blowing near her pretty face, and, without replying, she nestled close to her father.

"No, not a wink of sleep," continued M. Marron, restoring his check handkerchief to his tail-pocket. "At three o'clock this morning Aglae—that is, our servant—observed that there had been enough powder wasted to keep a hundred families comfortably for a year, and to bury a hundred others in a first-class style. That's what Aglae said."

"Yet it wasn't much of a fight," hiccoughed the vinous citizen, sliding a mistrustful glance on M. Marron, because of the latter's gloves, and also because of the word "servant," which rang ill in Republican ears. "I don't know what may be the opinion of those who have servants," added he, with a shrug, "but the people, who are accustomed to do their work for themselves, and to do it well, will ask for an account of last night's treason, or else I'm mistaken."

"Last night's treason! You surprise me," exclaimed M. Marron, much interested. "Now, hearing all those discharges of artillery, I made up my mind those poor fellows were being led to certain glory; and I greatly pitied them, though they did rob me of my night's rest."

"Whenever the people are beaten, there is treason at the bottom of it," declaimed the tipsy citizen, sententiously. "There are men who have an interest in keeping the people from being victorious, and it always will be so, until true patriots elect proper chiefs; but"—he broke off, as if modesty prevented him from saying what were the kind of men who should lead true patriots—"but I know what I think, and that's enough."

M. Marron would have much liked to prolong a conversation so instructive, but Agathe, who was not prepossessed in the citizen's favour, tugged gently at her father's arm, and tried to draw him away. Perhaps M. Marron might have resisted the tug, but Agathe suddenly ejaculated,

"Oh, papa, do look at that poor young man! What has he done? They will be killing him!"

The poor young man in question was a Federal Colonel, who had just galloped through the gate on a white horse reeking with blood and foam. He wore a smart black and scarlet uniform, with gold epaulets and lace, a red silk sash, and varnished knee-boots, and the morning sun beating on all this finery made it glitter with theatrical effect. The young man, however, was wildly excited, and he truly seemed in danger of his life, for, in dashing over the moat bridge, he had shouted to the fugitives who were obstructing him, "Out of the way, pack of cowards! You moved faster than that when the enemy were opposite you!"

"Cowards!" yelled a few insurgents, turning round as if whipped.

"Yes, cowards, poltrons! hare-footed braggarts!" sang out the Colonel; and as he imprudently repeated his insults as fast as they could rise to his tongue, and endeavoured to spur his horse through and over the mob, an uproar ensued. Women rushed up, brandishing their fists; insurgent soldiers, delighted to show insubordination which could have no danger when they were several dozens to one, clubbed their rifles and gnashed oaths; and the small boys, still more gratified to pelt a man with so much gold lace about him, caught up handfuls of mud and commenced throwing at random. Amidst all this M. Marron's late interlocutor might have been seen pocketing his pipe with alacrity and hastening to join the fray. "That's one of the traitors," he mumbled; "one who eats the substance of the People! Pull him off his horse!"

This feat was already being attempted. Several rough hands had been laid on the horse's bridle, and the animal was plunging. The Colonel kicked out to right and left of him, and, being unable to grapple his sword, plied his fist impartially on the nearest heads; but a hard blow on the nostrils caused the horse to rear; a dozen women and soldiers thereon clutched the Colonel by the legs, arms, and belt, dragging him from the saddle, and he fell heavily to the ground, amidst a hullaballoo of triumph.

At that moment he stood a good chance of being trampled to death, but luckily the maddened plunges of his horse saved him, by obliging his molesters to loosen their hold. In momentarily retreating they gave him time to spring to his legs and to draw his sword, which he whistled round his head, keeping the whole mob at bay. "Back, you vile herd! One of you has stolen my watch!"

"It was one you had filched yourself," retorted a dozen voices with ready repartee; and the rest of the mob, among whom the vinous citizen was loudest in his vociferations, continued to shout, "Traitor! thief! coward!" but without approaching within reach of the sword.

"Ah, it's I who am a coward, is it!" exclaimed the young Colonel, who seemed more than half-delirious; "I—I, who would have led you to capture a battery, if you had not raced away like dogs the moment the enemy opened fire; and they were not a third as numerous as we! Ah!

I'm a coward! Look at this!" and tearing open his tunic, he exposed a bleeding gash on his chest. "Look at that wound I received fighting for you! If there's one among you who can show anything like it, let him come forward, and he shall have my sword!"

The wound was a mere scratch, but the oratorical gesture with which the young man laid his hands on his bleeding flesh was fine. The mob's shouts subsided into half-abashed growls, and the impressiveness of the scene was heightened when the young man, who had been hurt by the fall from his horse, and was, besides, faint from loss of blood and excitement, clasped a hand to his forehead, staggered, and dropped swooning. The crowd quickly circled round him; some women knelt over his prostrate form, and it was soon seen that these good Samaritans were relieving him of his golden epaulets, his silk scarf and sword, and even of his varnished boots, under pretext that this would help to revive him. One of them then declared that the tunic should be removed too. Three or four others assisted her in the friendly job, and in less than a minute the Colonel had been stripped of everything but his shirt and his buckskin breeches. His succourers then vanished, taking away his spoils and his horse, and a score or so of bystanders were all that remained to gaze at him, and advise that water should be got to bathe his head—though no one volunteered to procure this restorative.

It was at this juncture that M. Marron and his daughter broke through the ring, and Agathe, pale and clasping her hands, exclaimed, "Oh, papa, he will die if he is left there! Could we not take him to his home?"

"There's nothing to show where he lives," replied an onlooker in deep disgust; "his breeches-pockets are empty."

Then M. Marron spoke, clearing his throat: "I will give forty sous to anyone who helps me to carry that young man to my residence in the Rue de Fleurus."

II.

Three hours after this scene the Communist Colonel awoke in M. Marron's bedroom. It was a chamber furnished with faded yellow velvet of Utrecht, the chairs being stiff and straight, after the fashion of the Consulate and Empire. There was a great deal of brass binding about the bed and the chest of drawers, on which figured, as a centre-piece, a glass shade covering the bridal wreath which the late Mdme. Marron had worn more than a quarter of a century before. The bed and window curtains were of red chintz bordered with yellow hems; and both the windows overlooked what had been a stable-yard when the Rue de Fleurus housed richer folk than it does at present. Of late years the yard had been given over to a printing-shop, established in the old stables and coach-house; and it was filled all day by printer's devils, who came out there to wet their paper for printing, to dry ink-rollers, or to break up type. At the window farthest from the bed sat Agathe Marron silently working.

The wounded man, after noiselessly turning round, opened his eyes, and stared at her. She was then seventeen, and wore that air of virgin grace which is never found with such sweet perfection as in young French girls who have been brought up in entire ignorance of the world. Her eyes—large, hazel eyes—had a deep wondering expression, and fixed themselves on those who spoke to her with a quiet trustful gaze, unsuspicious of deceit. Her chesnut hair, to which no false locks were attached, was plainly combed down in bands, such as one sees in the prints of twenty years ago; and she had on a black merino dress, with neat white collar and cuffs. While working she lifted her eyes now and then towards the bed, and in so doing, a few moments after the patient had begun to scrutinize her, perceived that he had become conscious. Then he had an opportunity of hearing her voice, which was soft and innocent as a child's.

"You are awake, sir?" said she, rising and approaching the bed.

"Yes, but where am I?" asked the Colonel, propping himself with astonishment on one elbow, without ceasing to stare at her.

"You are in the lodgings of Monsieur Marron," answered Agathe, reddening a little at the intentness of his gaze. "You were brought in wounded, but the doctor says you are not injured, and will be able to move to-morrow, if you lie quiet to-day."

"Ah, yes, I think I remember. There was a battle, was there not?" And the insurgent passed an apprehensive hand over his limbs. "I do not feel hurt—perhaps I could get up now?"

"Oh, sir, not to-day!" pleaded Agathe. "You spoke when you were brought here, but your mind was wandering; and the doctor assures us you must rest till to-morrow. I will call my father."

M. Marron, however, having heard voices, had bustled in from the next room, for he was on very tenter-hooks to ascertain the name and quality of his guest. On his heels followed a tall, sour-visaged servant, the Aglae to whom M. Marron had alluded at the Vaugirard gate. She had ruled over the ex-clerk's household before Agathe was born, and was one of those valuable persons whose devotion is good to read of in books, but a trifle less pleasant in real life. It was she who first spoke by crying shrilly—

"There's no need to make any fuss, mam'selle. The doctor said Monsieur's wound was nothing, but that he wanted quiet, and quiet he must have. Besides, he's unable to go home, for he has no coat or boots, and a man can't walk out without them, even in these times."

"What has become of my coat and boots?" asked the Colonel, sitting up and glancing about him with somewhat of anxiety. "I had a watch, too, and a pocketbook; and then there was my horse—has he been seen to?"

"The people at the Vaugirard gate took away all your things, sir," answered Agathe, with concern. "We have been hoping that they may have known your name, and that you may find everything when you go home."

The Colonel gave a true French shrug: "I think there is little danger of that, mademoiselle," rejoined he with a slightly bitter smile. "However, the loss is not great—there are more where those things came from."

"Be assured, sir, that my whole wardrobe is at your disposal," interposed M. Marron, obsequiously, and evidently impressed by the cool way in which his guest treated the purloining of his property. "If it be not indiscreet, might I inquire the name of the distinguished officer whom I have the honour to house?"

"My name is Victor de Fielot, Colonel of the 200th Legion, and I lodge at the Palace of the Legion of Honour," answered the patient, uttering his name and title not uncomplacently. "If you send to the palace, an orderly will come up and bring me another uniform and things."

"We'll send when you're fit to stir, not before," replied old Aglae, sharply. "We had enough waking last night, and are not going to have a lot of soldiers making free with our rooms this evening—that is," added she, half-relenting, "unless you've a wife or mother, who is likely to be anxious at not hearing from you?"

Was it the play of the sunlight through the window-blinds that made it seem as if Agathe Marron changed colour while she waited for the wounded man to answer Aglae's question? Her face was partly turned away from the bed, and her hands appeared to sort the reels in her workbox.

"I have no wife or mother," replied the insurgent, in a careless voice.

Again the sunlight seemed to come into play, and Agathe turned her face wholly away. At the same time the wounded man sank back on his pillow, while M. Marron installed himself at his bedside.

III.

Victor de Fielot passed a quiet night under M. Marron's roof, and in the morning the doctor declared him able to move. But somehow the patient dissented from this opinion, and begged for another day and night's rest. He had spent the previous afternoon in conversation with M. Marron, and in frequent glances towards the window, where Agathe sat with her head placidly bent over work; and at dinner-time the table had been drawn near his bedside, so that—by his particular request—his host and Agathe might dine with him. Aglae suggested, with her customary tartness, that it was all this chatting that had retarded the patient's cure; but he protested, alleging that he felt almost well, only that he longed for a few more hours of the domestic peace from which he had been so many months severed.

M. Marron concurred in the prudence of his guest's resolve, and was proud of it, though the prolonged stay would oblige him to sleep a second night on a sofa-bed. But in succouring the Communist chief the ex-clerk had not obeyed the dictates solely of charity. He had rapidly reflected that if there ever was a chance of getting his pension increased it must surely be enhanced by securing the friendship of one of the Com-

munist leaders; and in addition to this he hoped he should be able to worm out of his guest what the prospects of the insurrection definitely were. The longer the Colonel remained with him the greater would be the latter's indebtedness, and the greater, too, in all probability, his tendency to be communicative.

So M. Marron sent out Aglae to purchase some dainties for breakfast; and when the doctor's visit was over the Colonel got up, wrapped himself in M. Marron's simili-cashmere dressing-gown, and came to sit in the drawing-room, which was furnished in blue Utrecht velvet, faded like that of the bedroom, and ornamented with an alabaster clock and chimney-vases filled with old paper roses. On the walls were two portraits in oil of M. Marron in his youth and of Mdme. Marron, with corkscrew ringlets. It was an honest sort of room in its cheap finery; and that old Aglae possessed great respect for it was shown by her never entering without dusting something—a rather superfluous precaution, for she bestowed an hour's uninterrupted labour on it every morning, till the mahogany backs of the chairs and the polished oak floor glistened like mirrors.

In this room, then, Victor de Fielot sat all day, except at repast-time, watching Agathe work, and listening absently to the ceaseless babble that flowed from M. Marron. Throughout the morning and afternoon the rumble of artillery-carriages resounded in the street below, with tramping of infantry and peals of those eternal bugles, for troops were being massed at the Vaugirard gate, and there was talk of a general sortie. All this stimulated the talkative *verve* of M. Marron to the utmost; and then there was his neighbour the printer downstairs, who struck off two Communist newspapers, so that M. Marron obtained earlier copies than the rest of the world, and was enabled to supply his guest with the freshest news. He told him how the Commune had decreed the arrest of General Cluseret in connection with the affair of the 28th; and how, on the other hand, M. Rochefort's *Mot d'Ordre* was celebrating that affair as a brilliant victory. He read the decree dividing Paris into two military divisions, under the command of a pair of Poles, Dombrowski and Wroblenski; and the report of the sitting of the Commune, at which a member had moved the summary execution of all nuns, priests, and hostages. There was further a decree appointing "General" Eudes Chancellor of the Legion of Honour, and a paragraph relating how, a few hours after his nomination, that noble character had been picked up drunk in the Rue de Richelieu, with his two aides-de-camp.

M. Marron read the decree aloud, but he skipped the paragraph, being naturally sedulous to say nothing that might ruffle the susceptibilities of the insurgent officer. To this end he from first to last kept a careful guard over his tongue, approved by a simper but not by speech the criticisms —and very rough criticisms they were, only M. Marron apprehended their very roughness might be a trap—which the Colonel let fall, in alluding to some of the Communist celebrities; and he suffered severely in mind lest that cross-grained Aglae, who was by no means partial to social regenera-

tion, should speak out her thoughts with more truth than caution. It so chanced that Aglae did speak out her thoughts, and no later than during breakfast; for as the party were taking their seats at the table, which was decked with a show of pink radishes, pats of swimming butter, silvery sardines, and golden-crusted rolls, she remarked—

"Monsieur le Colonel will find the rolls new; and it's a mercy, for we've had to put off our breakfast-hour because of that Tomfool's edict about night-baking.* If monsieur has any influence over our governors he will do well to tell them not to behave like children."

"The edict was an absurd one, but I have not influence enough over the Commune to prevent their doing absurdities," laughed the Colonel, good-naturedly.

"Perhaps, though, you've power enough to prevent them turning our churches into pig-styes," continued Aglae, with intrepidity. "If I were a colonel, with soldiers under me, I wouldn't stand such things. There's that Church of St. Eustache, which has become a club where a woman called Louise Michel preaches blasphemy and vicé, so that I marvel she doesn't fear the fire of heaven will fall and burn her witch's tongue out!"

"Hush, Aglae; go and see to the steaks," stammered M. Marron, in great alarm. "Colonel, let me help you to some of this omelette; my daughter, Agathe, beat up the eggs for it herself."

"The steaks shan't prevent my saying what I think is right," grumbled Aglae, making a clatter with some plates as she moved towards the door, and disregarding the beseeching glances which Agathe was throwing at her. "Who'd ever have thought I should have lived to see poor priests hunted about like vermin, and Mademoiselle Agathe there kept from going to church, because a parcel of good-for-noughts don't believe in the God who made them?"

"I am very sorry that the churches have been interfered with," said the Colonel, gently, to M. Marron, when Aglae had disappeared; "but there are many other acts of the Commune which I disapprove, and I only hope things will come back to their old condition after the civil war."

It seemed a wonder that this insurgent should submit so peaceably to attacks on the cause for which he had been risking his life; but as the hours wore on he appeared to be as anxious to ingratiate himself with M. Marron as his host was to get into his own good books. The two passed the day in mutual attempts to dole out honey to each other. M. Marron soon noticed, however, that all allusions, even flattering, to the Commune were growing distasteful to his guest. The Colonel vouchsafed no explanation as to why he had joined the insurrection, nor what he had hoped of it, nor did he say what he had been before the war, nor who were his friends. Only once, when Agathe remarked innocently that she liked the sight of a regiment drawn up on parade, the insurgent's eyes kindled, and he

* The Commune had prohibited night-baking, in the interest of the journeymen bakers, who had memorialised against "a practice prejudicial to health and domestic happiness." People who breakfasted early under the Commune ate stale bread.

offered to exhibit himself to her riding at the head of his legion in the courtyard of the Carrousel. But this flash of vanity had no sequel; and for the rest of the afternoon the Colonel conversed with Agathe about her own occupations, little joys, and small worries. It requires no ordinary power of homely fascination to make a well-bred young French girl discourse about herself; but presumably Victor de Fielot possessed this fascination, for Agathe gradually was led to prattle artlessly to him about her school-days, the death of her mother, her efforts to learn housekeeping, and the Sunday excursions on which she was accustomed to go with her father during summer-time in the environs of Paris. From this conversation, to which the Colonel listened with all his ears, M. Marron was not excluded, for, whatever were the topic, he found means of throwing on it a luminous observation; but by-and-by things took a turn which left him out, and the young people enjoyed each other's society by themselves. It came about by Victor asking Agathe whether she would sing him something. There was an old piano in the drawing-room; and after dinner, when the two men had smoked a cigarette near the open window, the curtains were drawn, the lamp was lighted, and Victor reminded Agathe that he had elicited from her that she could sing.

She had become pretty intimate with him by this time, and perceiving him to be so gentle and appreciative, was beginning, with the innate coquetry of her sex and nation, to assert her ascendency over him.

"I know no battle-songs, Colonel," said she, archly.

"I do not want a battle-song," he replied, as a gloomy look flitted quickly over his face. The distant booming of cannon had been audible all day, and one could not hearken a moment without recollecting the sinister struggle that was raging outside. "Not a battle-song," he repeated almost plaintively; "sing me something about fresh fields, the chirping of birds, peasant villages, and—church bells."

"Church bells!" she echoed, bending a rather wistful look on him; but it was with a softened manner that she went to the piano and glided her fingers over the keys. Quietly and with religious feeling she preluded a pastoral by an imitation of those simple steeple chimes, which summon men to thank the Author of all good gifts, and to pray for grace to live in brotherhood with one another.

Now, music had the property of lulling M. Marron into a soothing sleep, so that when it became a question of piano he retired into a dark corner and spread a newspaper over his knees, making as though he was going to listen attentively all the evening. But at the first bar he closed his eyes, and at the second he nodded. Soon a boom of cannon louder than usual roused him with a start; but remembering that he flourished under a *régime* of social regeneration, he dozed off again beatifically, and a few seconds later was wrapped in the sleep of the just and unjust.

How long he slumbered is not certain, but when he awoke the room was hushed. The piano had long ceased playing, and Victor de Fielot and Agathe were seated at the table conversing almost in whispers and turn-

ing over the leaves of an album. They were nestled close together, and the shade of the lamp forming the light over them framed both their heads in an aureola of brightness. He was fair, she dark. His hair and slight moustache were of blonde colour, his eyes blue, and his pink complexion had lines of reckless daring strangely blended with the characteristics of a weak dreamy nature. She, in her innocent vivacity, had all the strength of sweet goodness, and, side by side, they undoubtedly made a comely picture.

The album which they were examining, with long pauses for talk between each page, was full of dried flowers which Agathe had collected while botanising in her summer excursions. She explained when and where she had culled each flower ; and when M. Marron awoke she was so much engrossed in a narrative about some forget-me-nots, that neither she nor Victor noticed M. Marron sit up and rub his eyes, yawning. "They are *vergiss-mein-nichts* I picked up in the park of St. Cloud before that cruel war," said Agathe, with a little sigh.

"And do you know what the emblem means ?" asked Victor, lowering his voice and essaying to take her hand. "Will you allow me to keep one in remembrance of you ?" added he ; and murmuring this, he with his spare hand unfastened one of the little flowers and carried it to his lips.

At this moment Agathe, glancing towards her father, perceived that he had been a somnolent witness of the scene. It was a very harmless scene, but it was also the first such in her life. She rose, blushing like a carnation, and faltered out, "Papa, Monsieur le Colonel would probably like some tea—I will see to it ;" and hereon fled from the room.

After this the Colonel had another good night's rest ; and there is no saying whether he might not have invited himself to remain a third day, as M. Marron's guest, had not circumstances occurred which made a further stay impossible. As soon as the Colonel was up on this second morning, M. Marron knocked at the door and bustled in, flourishing a newspaper. "There are inquiries about you here, Colonel—two inquiries —see." And he pointed first to the following paragraph :—

"The persons who rescued Colonel Victor de Fielot at the Vaugirard gate on the 29th are requested kindly to communicate the address where he was conveyed to the Citoyenne Léontine Fovard, Palace of the Legion of Honour, as the Colonel's friends are anxious about him. A reward will be given to anyone who shall bring news of the Colonel's whereabouts ; or, if the information be sent by letter, the writer need not pay the postage."

The other notice was from an official source :—

"The directors of any ambulance in which the Citizen de Fielot, Colonel of the 200th Legion, may have been conveyed are requested to make known at the War Office whether the said Citizen be alive or dead—this with a view that the 200th Legion may elect a successor, should he be deceased."

Victor de Fielot read the first paragraph with a frown and an impatient

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shrug, but at the second he declared he must go, and asked whether a commissionnaire could be fetched, that he might send him to the Palace with a note. There were no commissionnaires under the Commune, but, like many other institutions that are supposed to vanish after revolutions, the thing remained though the title was extinct, and an independent citizen was found who for a consideration agreed to go to the Quay d'Orsay. He was brought up by Aglae, and the Colonel remitted him, not one note, but two, closing the door, however, so that he might give him instructions in private. This naturally aroused the curiosity of Aglae, who found it expedient to dust the lower panels of the door, laying her ear close to the keyhole, and so overheard the Communist officer say—

"You will give the first of these notes to my orderly, and tell him to drive up here at once in a cab, and *alone*, with my best uniform, sword, and boots. This second note you will give to the Citoyenne Fovard herself; and mind you impress upon her that she is not to come up here, for I am in a private house. Say I shall join her immediately on leaving this. My orderly will give you twenty francs. See that you execute this commission without blundering."

The independent citizen went, but when he was gone Victor de Fielot appeared to be fidgetty. His dreamy languor of the previous evening had given place to nervous energy, as if the fear of losing his post had whipped his blood. Wrapped once more in M. Marron's dressing-gown, he passed into the drawing-room, politely saluting Agathe, and paced about rather feverishly from the hearthrug to the window, whilst his host retailed to him the morning's news—the apprehension of Cluseret, the last sortie, with conflicting accounts as to its being a defeat and a victory—and a stormy sitting of the Commune, owing to an obscure member named Puget having offered his resignation, which his colleagues refused to accept, on the ground, as usual, that he must be a traitor. The Colonel listened with a show of interest, and did not try to change the subject, as he had done the day before; on the contrary, when M. Marron had gabbled out all he knew the Colonel much gratified him by inquiring whether a certain newspaper which he mentioned could be purchased in that quarter. Perhaps he foresaw that M. Marron would obligingly rush out to buy it himself, and that he should then be left for a little while alone with Agathe.

They were left alone, and for a minute or two an embarrassing silence prevailed. Agathe was not the same as she had been two days ago—it takes so little time to turn the current of a girl's life! She wore an air of happiness mingled with anxiety; her eyes were bright, but her features were a little pale, and her manners were reserved. She knew that the Colonel was going away, but she had not seen the paragraphs which summoned him, for Victor had pocketed the paper immediately after reading its contents, and M. Marron had instinctively refrained from alluding in her presence to the Citoyenne Fovard. Coughing to break the silence, Victor now repeated that he was going because he was

wanted in his regiment. He said nothing about other people wanting him; and it must have been still fresh in Agathe's mind how he had declared two days before that he had no wife or mother. And yet, with that feminine slyness, the first display of which must always be noted as a significant symptom in young girls, Agathe remarked, "Your friends will be very glad to see you."

"I have no friends," answered the Colonel, mournfully.

"No friends?" echoed Agathe, with compassion, but also with a gleam in her eyes that belied the tone of her voice.

"No friends that I care for," replied the Communist, in a forlorn way; "but, oh! Mademoiselle Agathe, I have been so happy here these two days! It was like a glimpse of my childhood, when I had a home and a mother, and never guessed I should be drawing the sword against my own countrymen. If I live will you allow me to call again at times, when there are no battles—when the war is over?"

"My father will always be pleased to see you, I am sure," murmured Agathe; and, with downcast eyes, she added, "But why talk of battles? Must you always fight in them?"

"Well, we are in the midst of a struggle which must end soon, one way or the other; and those who are beaten will have to pay a heavy reckoning," answered the Communist, with sombre agitation. "But, mademoiselle, promise me this"—and he looked very beseechingly into her face as he held out a hand to her—"you may hear many things about me—do not believe them all. Remember that we often yield to temptations which would not have got the better of us could we have been stopped in time by a loving hand—a hand like yours."

There were tears in his eyes as he said this, and her own face was blanched of all its colour; but she had no time to answer, for a cab trundled up to the entrance below and some steps were heard on the staircase. When the door opened M. Marron marched in, followed by a red-nosed Communist soldier, laden with a valise, a sword, and a pair of boots with gilt spurs.

"Here is the newspaper you wanted, Colonel, and here is your orderly," pompously shouted M. Marron. "The brave fellow rode up just as I arrived, and he seems to have been afraid you were dead."

The Colonel cast a quick startled glance over the shoulder of the brave fellow to see that there was nobody behind him, and, perceiving that he was alone, appeared relieved. But his satisfaction was shortlived, for almost immediately a bell tinkled; and on Aglae going to answer the call, a handsome, over-dressed woman flustered by, entered the drawing-room without pausing, and flew straight to Victor, throwing her arms round his neck and kissing him on both cheeks with extravagant demonstrations of joy.

There was no mistaking the social rank of this person. Frenchwomen can never dress wholly with bad taste; but this one had a style of wearing her silken attire which proved her to be not yet inured to the use of

finery; and her manners had that impulsive *abandon* of the woman who sees no sin in anything, and has no care to conceal her impressions, good or evil.

"Ah! I've found you at last, my poor Victor," she exclaimed, kissing him again and again, and then placing her hands on his shoulders and pushing him back a little, the better to survey him. "Well, you can plume yourself on having thrown us all into a fine state. Some said you had been killed; others that you had decamped, and sold yourself for twenty sous to the Versaillais. And then there was that noodle whom you sent this morning, and who told me so mysteriously not to come here, that I instantly put on my bonnet and followed him—smelling a rat. I was saying to myself all the way that he must have been sent for to embalm you at least. But you don't seem happy to see me."

Victor in truth did not seem happy to see her: his face had changed to a leaden hue.

"You ought not to have come here," he said, in a voice trembling with confusion and anger, and thrusting her aside roughly.

"What! I've no right to come to you when you're ill?" she ejaculated, astonished. "Why, who is to nurse you, then?" She turned round sharply, noticed Agathe, and stopped short, sweeping the young girl from head to foot with one of those lightning glances by which women scathe a suspected rival. "Ah, I see!" she remarked, puckering up her lips. "I am much obliged to you, mademoiselle, for nursing my Victor; but for the future, my darling," and she turned to Victor again, "you will have no other nurse but me. Now, come, and let me help you to put on your uniform. You must make yourself smart, for there is a spread this morning in old Protot's rooms at the Ministry of Justice, and I have promised you shall be there. It seems somebody has unearthed twelve dozens of champagne from Madame de Gallifet's house, and there'll be some Johannisberg from Thiers's cellars."

Victor hung his head, and cast an ashamed look towards Agathe, who stood as if petrified, the quivering of her lips alone betokening that there was life in her. She remained motionless till the door closed behind the couple, and till a peal of the bold woman's laughter resounded in the adjoining room. Then she stretched out her hands like one blinded and tottered to her own chamber with feeble steps. Her father stood by with mouth agape, feeling that something strange was happening, but not understanding what.

Half an hour afterwards, when the Communist Colonel emerged in his resplendent uniform, and with the Citoyenne Léontine Fovard on his arm, he slipped a few gold pieces into Aglae's palm, and shook hands with M. Marron, thanking him for his hospitality. But he did not ask to take leave of Agathe—and he did well, for the poor child on reaching her room had fainted on the floor.

IV.

We have said that two days had sufficed to work a great change in Agathe Marron; they were also enough to transform Victor Fielot. He had entered the ex-clerk's house without having elaborated any definite plans as to the time when he should throw away his sword and make off with his money; he left it pining to be quit at once of the lurid atmosphere in which he lived, and to settle into peaceful domestic life. The truth is he was in love with Agathe Marron. Her innocence and beauty had charmed him. Since first seeing her he had reflected very yearningly how sweet his life might become with such a companion; and the tranquil existence which he had led for two days in her society had aroused all the better instincts of his nature, and thrilled those fibres which tie every man's inmost heart to thoughts of home.

Let it be here remarked that Victor Fielot was not innately bad—not cruel or vicious for the love of the thing. He was one of those men whom society should exterminate without quarter, for they are ten times more dangerous than ordinary malefactors; but once in possession of money, he might have been trusted to use it well, and to develop into an honest man in the current sense of that term. Furthermore, Fielot reconciled his ill-gotten gains very easily with his conscience. Like the majority of Frenchmen, he had no religious scruples; and being cognizant of so many men in high station who had made money by illicit means, and enjoyed universal consideration, he thought—and too shrewdly, —that all morality consists in not being found out. He even flattered himself that his money had been much more honestly amassed than that of many financiers and politicians who had grown rich by joint-stock swindles or by rigging the stock-market, and here, again, he was not wholly wrong. His 150,000 francs, as he argued, had belonged to somebody who was in all probability now dead, and his daily embezzlements of pay had been freely surrendered him for services rendered. If he could instal himself in some snug country-house in Switzerland or Belgium with Agathe, he would never more care to defraud a soul, and by the honest use he made of his fortune he would speedily atone, in his own eyes, for the irregular way in which he had acquired it. But first he must marry Agathe, and how could he do that after the scandal which Léontine Fovard's presence and behaviour must have caused?

This was the question he asked of himself, and he racked his head over it as he drove away from the Rue de Fleurus with his mistress, Léontine divining with all the jealous intuition of women what was passing in his mind. She, too, had not a few good qualities underlying her profligacy, for certain forms of vice which seem to obliterate every trace of self-respect in English women do not operate in the same way among the French. Léontine was very deeply attached to Victor Fielot, who was her only lover. She would have stooped to any species of crime for his sake, but she did not like crime; and she

cherished a secret hope—which was the dream and the anxiety of all her hours—that when the war was over they might both fly together, and that a marriage might consecrate their union. Therefore her discovery that Victor was in love with Agathe filled her with a sudden despair and a fury far greater than she dared outwardly reveal. She sat beside her companion, and watched his knitted brow, with a sinking at the heart that almost robbed her of strength; and when abruptly Victor turned round and upbraided her with passionate wrath for having soiled an honest house with her presence, she quailed. But she was not a woman to quail long, nor to let her chances of happiness be torn from her without making a desperate struggle to save them. Victor refused to go at once to the breakfast at the Ministry of Justice; he told the coachman to drive to the Quay d'Orsay, and when he had reached the Palace he mounted straight to his own room and locked himself in. Léontine, with fevered brow, repaired to another chamber that opened on the staircase, and whence she could follow all Victor's movements if he came out. There she watched.

She had not to watch long, for Victor had taken his resolution. He was no sooner alone than he sat down to write to Agathe one of those burning letters in which a lover who has sinned pours out his whole soul in protestations of tenderness and entreaties for forgiveness. He did not pause to read what he wrote. His pen flew straight over the paper; he filled sheet after sheet with assurances of the devotion he would bestow on Agathe if she would link her fate to his, and in so doing he sketched out a full plan for his escape from Paris. At the end of an hour he finished his letter; sealed it, then unlocked the door, and rang the bell for his servant.

Léontine saw this red-nosed man go in and come out, and when he was passing the door behind which she lurked she beckoned to him to come in. The red-nosed man had no particular reason to feel devoted to his mushroom Colonel. A piece of gold was more than enough to make him surrender the letter; only he asked for something else which he might carry to the Rue de Fleurus, in order to be able to give satisfactory replies if Fielot should question him as to who had received the missive. Léontine nodded, and appeared struck by an idea. A vindictive flash shot through her eyes, and she at once sat down, dashing off a note, which she enclosed in the envelope that Victor had used. Before sealing the letter, however, she felt in her purse for a bank-note and inserted it in the envelope. The man then walked off unconcernedly with his new parcel.

There was always wine in the cupboards of these Communist folk. So after throwing open the window, to see that the messenger was safe on his way down the street, Léontine took a bottle of champagne off a shelf, struck off the neck with a knife, and poured half the contents into a large tumbler. She drank the draught as if it had been so much water, and with her nerves so steadied crouched down rather than sat to read her Victor's love-letter. She thus crouched half an

hour, poring over the lines with eyeballs aglare and limbs shivering as in an ague. Twice she re-read the letter; then with cheeks flushed and eyes wild, but demeanour apparently calmed, she ascended to Victor's room and knocked. It was a noble room, which had formerly been the study of the Chancellor of the Legion of Honour—a place where many a Frenchman had come in Imperial days to beg for the magic red-ribbon. The Colonel was standing with his back to the mantelshelf and smoking. He had spent so much excitement in writing his vows and prayers to Agathe, that now a reaction had set in, and he was moody. The sight of Léontine, however, aroused his smouldering anger, and he said curtly, "I shall not go to that breakfast at Protot's—and to-night I shall change my lodging. I find arrears of work here, and a man cannot think or write with soldiers rioting in that courtyard." Saying which he waved his hand towards the window, whence one could descry a mob of shabby soldiers playing pitch and toss, and chaffing one another.

"Very well!" answered Léontine, calmly. "I will pack up our things and be ready."

"You need not give yourself the trouble—Jean will see to my traps, and there is no reason why you should move."

"You mean, then, that I am not to go with you?" she said, making an effort to contain herself.

"Yes, I do," he replied, impatiently. "After what occurred this morning the sooner we part the better."

Léontine rapidly advanced towards him and brought her face close to his. It was a handsome face, but its expression was so menacing that the cigar which was on its way to the Colonel's lips stopped short, and Fielot felt a sensation of passing cold in the limbs.

"Look here, Victor," muttered Léontine, dwelling on each of her words with trembling force; "you and I never part so long as we both are alive. Crime has united us. I have given up my life to you—I love you. Ask me to grovel in the mud that you may have a meal, or to fling myself on a bayonet that you may escape a scratch, and I will obey you. But I would sooner kill you with my own hands, aye, or have you killed by others, than see you the husband of another woman."

"Queer love!" said Victor, with a stinging laugh.

"It's love according to my own notions," she answered, with a reckless gesture. "I can't give you any other."

"You're intoxicated!" retorted Victor, brutally pushing her back as she tried to clutch at him, half for support, half in supplication.

"I'm more than that—I feel mad," sobbed she, seizing his arms, and this time with such strength that he could not cast her off. "Don't defy me, Victor; it would be the worse for both of us. You can only judge of the extent of the harm I should do you by the depth of my love and devotion if you let me remain with you as before. You will, won't you, Victor? You know how meek and good I have always been with you. You won't drive me away?"

She had sunk to her knees, and seeing her so wild and despairing, he thought it prudent to appease her, for he knew of what acts of vengeance women are capable if pushed to lengths. Accordingly, after a moment's inward combat, during which she twined herself round him as if she feared to be torn from him by bodily strength, he said, with a hollow laugh, "Why, all this is nonsense, Titine; who ever meant you to take my words so seriously? That little girl in the Rue de Fleurus had money, which I wanted to get from her, and I was angry with you for spoiling my game—that's all."

Base as he was, he loathed himself for this falsehood, which cast a slime of unworthy motives on his love for Agathe; but he would have loathed himself still more could he have guessed that his letter to Agathe was in Léontine's pocket, and that she knew his words were untruths, only intended to quiet her resentment until he could find an opportunity for deserting her.

V.

The letter which the Communist soldier took to the Rue de Fleurus in Colonel Fielot's name was addressed to Agathe herself, and ran in this wise:—

"Mademoiselle,—My husband finds himself a little unwell on reaching home, but he begs me to write and renew his thanks for the hospitality you so amiably afforded him during three days. As that hospitality probably put you to some expense, he directs me to enclose you a bank-note for a hundred francs.

"Receive the assurances of my personal gratitude and esteem.

"LÉONTINE FIELOT."

To say that this infamous letter crushed all that had remained of illusion in Agathe's heart after Victor's departure is to say too little. In one day the poor child, who had never endured or suspected evil at the hands of any living soul, was made to fathom the whole abyss of human baseness. She felt so stunned that she returned the bank-note in an envelope without a word of writing; and she refrained from telling her father that she had received the letter. This reticence she could not have explained if anyone had asked her the reason. But doubtless the cause could have been detected in one of those inexplicable weaknesses of love which makes it impossible for an innocent woman to despise wholly a man in whom she has reposed her trustful affection even for a day, and which makes it unspeakably bitter to her to see that man debased in other eyes. Agathe did not see or hear of Victor for four weeks; and during that time the clouds gathered thick and fast over the Insurgents of the Commune. There is no need to describe here the defeats and panics, the false alarms, the sanguinary predictions, the terror and general disorganisation of that final month of the rebellion; for all these things did not mix with the emotions of Agathe's life. She did not read the newspapers, and her father did not read them to her either, for he noticed—without being able entirely to

unravel the mystery—that from the day of Colonel de Fielot's departure she had begun to droop. There were blue rims round each of her eyes; her step had become slow, her voice plaintively soft, and she only spoke when addressed. The old servant, Aglae, more perspicuous than M. Marron, probably saw through the whole matter; but she kept her own counsel, which is the most charitable way of offering comfort in circumstances where no solace can avail. Thus Agathe was kept in ignorance that the Commune were being defeated. She heard the firing of cannon as usual, but she had become used to it; there had been so many months of cannonading, first by Germans, then by Frenchmen completing their country's ruin, that she had lapsed into a sort of belief that the war would last for ever.

One morning, however—one memorable morning—the report was spread that the Versailles troops had entered Paris during the night. It was on a Monday, and old Aglae brought the news when she returned from fetching the milk. "At last this ungodly Commune is defeated," grumbled she, with visible satisfaction; "and not too soon either."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed M. Marron, who was having his coat-collar brushed for him by Agathe. "You don't mean to say the Versaillais are already masters of the city?" and he made a move towards the door as if he already wished to be in the street.

"Not masters yet, and there'll be a few days' barricading, I dare say; but these unshriven ragamuffins can't hold out long. Meanwhile the orders are to open all the shutters and close the windows, so don't go opening a window to put your head out—do you hear, Monsieur Marron?"

"I think I'll take a turn, though, to see the look of matters," said M. Marron, as if his feet itched to go gadding.

"Yes, take a turn and get some bullets put into your curious head," retorted Aglae, shrilly. "What you'll do is to stay at home till all this is over, for I'm not going to have you brought home on a stretcher to frighten mademoiselle out of her senses. If you try to stir out I'll call up the neighbours to tie you down in bed."

M. Marron was miserable at having to stay at home. He groaned peevishly, and for an hour he ran to and fro like a caged animal, flattening his nose against the window-panes and watching the people and stray soldiers who rushed hurriedly down the street like shadows.

As for Agathe she sank down into a chair speechless; but her temples throbbed violently, for suddenly a great alarm had fallen upon her. So long as the Commune had held Paris she had not paid much attention to the fighting, nor had she ever entered into the rights and wrongs of the struggle. But now the whole truth broke upon her with a flash. It was not an ordinary war in which Victor de Fielot was engaged. He was not a soldier in arms against a foreign enemy, but an insurgent who had rebelled against the Government of his country; and if he was caught what would they do with him? As this question loomed up before her, she trembled from head to foot. Do what

she would she could not feel indifferent to the Communist Colonel's fate. She had endeavoured to put away his image from her mind. Through sleepless nights and weary days she had told herself that he was not worthy to occupy her thoughts, but at the certainty that he was in danger all her interest in him revived, and she remembered only the man who had clasped her hand and looked on her with tearful eyes, begging her not to misjudge him, but to recollect what temptations he had suffered. When the recollection of these words came back to her they dispelled every vestige of her resentment. Abruptly she rose, fled to her room and put on her bonnet. Then she hastened out towards the door, but was stopped in the passage by Aglae.

"Aglae," said she, impetuously, "I *must* go out."

"Go out!" cried the servant, who was carrying a pile of plates in her arms. "Why, have you turned crazy too?"

"Please let me pass, or I shall be too late," faltered Agathe, in a wandering way. "I will try to be back soon, but I cannot stay here just now—I want to know something."

Aglae, in surprise, set down her plates and pushed the girl back, but with not unkind force, into her room. Then Agathe sat down on her bed and burst into tears.

"Cry, my pet, relieve your heart; it will do you good," said the old servant, with motherly solicitude. "I know what's grieving you, but you may set your mind at rest. Those men can always take care of themselves; and besides, you could be of no use to him amid all this trouble."

Agathe knew that she could be of no use, and it was a passing folly that had impelled her to go out. But she cried piteously, and by-and-by, with the tears running from her eyes, she went to look through the closed windows of the drawing-room with her father. The tidings of the besiegers' entry into Paris had by this time reached to all the quarters of the city, and the distant echoes of bugles and alarm-drums could be heard calling insurgent battalions to muster. Soon companies of troops filed down the streets in heavy marching order, their knapsacks on their backs, their tin water-bottles by their sides, but their tunics open at the throat for greater convenience in fighting. There were National Guards, in red and black; the Vengeurs de Flourens, in white caps and trowsers; the Turcos of the Commune, in costumes of light blue and scarlet; and all these men showed signs of fatigue, having either been up all night or awakened too early. They tramped over the paving-stones, they trudged, they passed onwards, urged by the shouts of their mounted commanders, and before long from the direction where they had vanished came reports of rifle-firing, first single shots, then continuous discharges, keeping up a deafening rattle. All the people in the houses were pasting slips of paper over their windows, to save the panes from breaking through the concussion; but the shivering of glass could be heard now and then for all that, and occasionally some stray bullet, whistling along a roof, would shred away half-a-dozen slates and bring

them down with a clatter into the street. After a while these bullets arrived more frequently and in volleyed numbers. It seemed as though the combatants were approaching, and as though shots were being fired through the windows of upper storeys. One could distinguish the different hissing noises made by the bullets of Chassepot, Remington, and percussion rifles—the first a short *whish-h*, the second more tremulous, the third a prolonged whistle, as of silk being torn. Towards mid-day the first shell from a battery established at Mont Parnasse flew over the streets with that peculiar screech like a hawk's. Others succeeded; reports came faster and faster, and suddenly an ill-sped shell fell into the courtyard of one of the houses, exploding with a loud bang, and being followed by terrific riot of shrieks, broken glass, and falling stones. There was not a soul to be seen in the streets now. People had intrenched themselves in their lodgings, and scared faces peeped behind windows, exchanging by dumb finger-show questions with others over the way, and deriving little comfort from the conversation. From time to time a deserting rebel could be seen bounding through the street without arms or head-dress, having recoiled at the last moment from risking his life for the cause in which he had been enrolled, probably against his will. But the firing and carnage proceeded; and all this while the sun shone in all the glory of a warm May-day. The heavens were blue, the sun shot golden rays on to the white façades of the houses; and in the recesses of doorways large shadows appeared to offer cool peaceful shelters.

The fratricidal battle raged all day, and at nightfall gathered rather than diminished in intensity. By this time the sky was clouded by huge columns of smoke, and here and there long forked streaks of purple told of houses that were burning. The fight was drawing nearer, and it was evident that the Communists were losing ground. Whole companies of them, grimy with powder, footsore, and with many of the men limping, began to surge through the streets in routed disorder. But others hurried up from contrary directions, fierce, flushed, and heated with drink, so that there was no telling for certain with what hazards the warfare was being carried on. The combatants seemed to disappear into a yawning cavern of tumult and flame.

When night arrived, however, Agathe's anguish culminated in a revival of excitement, and she again talked deliriously about going out. As for M. Marron, he broiled with impatience to get news of some sort. Never since his boyhood had he passed twelve mortal hours without opening a newspaper; and thinking that Agathe's agitation was due to the same causes as his, he moaned sympathisingly with her, and exclaimed that it was a woful thing to be a whole day without knowing what was going on in one's own city. At nine o'clock the prospect of having to spend the night in utter ignorance of who were the winners crept like spasms over his mind, and proved too much for him. There was another *bourgeois* of his own inquisitive sort who lived opposite him, and M. Marron bethought him that

under cover of the dusk he could just run across the way and compare notes with this fellow-sufferer for a brief quarter of an hour. He did not impart his plan to Aglae, but rushed out without warning and bareheaded, for the servant had locked up his hat. Aglae, who heard his retreating feet scamper down the staircase, issued after him with a broom, but only caught sight of his coat-tails fluttering apart as he pelted away two steps at a time.

She turned back with a wrathful shrug, but immediately all her strength was in request to restrain Agathe, who, as soon as her father had departed, seemed to lose all control over her senses. Her face was haggard, her hands burned with fever, and she came to the door, entreating: "Aglae, I implore you to let me go out. It is dark now; nobody can see me."

"Do you think the bullets want eyes to fly through the night?" cried Aglae, with rough eloquence, as she barred the way. "Why, see too the house—it's all in a tremor from the noise, and shells may burst in the streets at any minute."

"I conjure you to let me go!" pleaded Agathe, making a feeble dart to pass by. "I shall die this night if you do not listen to me. My head is in a whirl with pain."

"You are beside yourself, that's it," cried the servant, forcibly shutting the door, and keeping Agathe back. "Go and lie down in your room, mademoiselle. How can you hope to find that man in the night? He must have left his house long ago, and be fighting now, or dead. Besides, if he were lying wounded in the street, and by running ten yards you could save him, I wouldn't let you. You've no mother now, and I've got to look after you."

But Agathe was not rebuffed. Women moved by the fire of love become heroines, and for the first time Agathe's gentle nature rose in rebellion; her eyes flashed, and her small hands were clenched. "I insist on going out—do you hear?" she broke out, with an hysteric sob, and advanced once more. But Aglae, without replying, caught her round the arms like a child, lifted her from the floor, and ran with her into the drawing-room, where she deposited her on a sofa. Scarcely had she crossed the threshold, however, than the bell on the landing of the flat was pulled, and as Agathe was struggling the servant quickly disengaged herself and ran to open the door, thinking it must be M. Marron who had rung, and that the presence of her father would make Agathe hear reason. So she turned the key in the lock, and a bearded man brushed hurriedly by her and passed into the drawing-room. But it was not M. Marron.

Agathe uttered a scream, for the man had pulled off his false beard and thrown himself in one rush at her feet. It was Victor Fielot, in civilian's dress. He was covered with dust, his face streamed with perspiration, and as he covered her trembling hands with kisses he stammered, "I could not come before. I have been watched for the past month—all my footsteps have been dogged by that woman. I warned you in my

letter what a harpy she was, but I added that I should come to you soon or late, whatever happened; and here I am."

"What letter?" faltered Agathe, who had no strength to withdraw her hands, nor indeed to do anything save ask this question.

"Why, did you not get my letter?" exclaimed Victor, starting. "I wrote on the very day I left here to tell you I loved you—to ask your forgiveness—to swear that as soon as I could desert that accursed cause I would come and pray your father to give me your hand, and that we might go away and live in some foreign land, forgetting all this. Say, Agathe, did you not receive that letter?"

"I received no letter," murmured Agathe; for, divining now that the other letter must have been sent her, unknown to Victor, by the woman who had signed herself Léontine, she was too generous to make allusion to it. An emotion full of joy, yet of lingering doubt, was running through her heart. Victor was opposite her, bending a yearning glance into her eyes, and her hands were still warm with his kisses. "No; I received no letter," she repeated faintly.

"Ah! that woman must have intercepted it," he cried, clasping his forehead, and muttering a curse. "But no matter, I am here, Agathe. I have two hundred and fifty thousand francs in bank-notes sewn about me. Hide me somewhere, in a cupboard, a cellar, anywhere, till the battle is over, and then I will leave Paris by St. Denis, where the Prussians are. I have a passport, and you can join me in England. But quick, my own child, for the Versaillais are already in this quarter, and before long they will be searching all the houses for refugees. They have done that in all the other quarters they have invaded."

Victor did not ask Agathe whether she accepted his love; he probably saw by her blushes and troubled glances that she did. Agathe rose when he had mentioned the instant imminence of danger, and made an appealing gesture to Aglae, who had been standing dumbstricken in the room since Victor's entry. Aglae was not evilly-disposed towards the Communist Colonel, for he had bestowed on her those gold pieces the last time he was there; and now his confession of having 10,000*l.* about him gave him an eminently respectable standing—outlaw though he was. "There is a deep cupboard in my room," said she, after a moment's puzzled scrutiny of the insurgent. "I can mask it with my bed, and nobody will suspect its existence; but it's not sure that anyone will search either."

"They will search," ejaculated Victor, passing a handkerchief over his reeking brow; "they are searching everywhere for arms and men in uniform. When they come don't mention that you've ever seen me."

"No danger," grumbled Aglae; "we don't want our throats cut for your sake. But what's that noise?"

The question was evoked by a sudden and loud altercation that was resounding on the staircase. M. Marron's tongue was protesting in terms of fright and indignation, and an angry woman was replying to him. Both Victor and Agathe recognised the tones of the woman's voice as Léontine

Fovard's; and before another half-minute had elapsed Léontine stood before them, glaring fury and jealous vengeance.

"Victor!" she cried, as Agathe clutched to her lover in terror. "Victor, you swear now before me, and in the presence of that woman, that you'll never more forsake me, or your minutes and hers are numbered. The Versaillais are at the end of the street!"

She was standing in the doorway, in a black silk dress and a long cloak, and her hair, disordered by emotion or by her mad ramble through Paris, fell over her brow and shoulders, giving her the look of an escaped maniac. Victor, who had turned livid at the first sound of her voice, now drew a revolver from his pocket, and strode towards her with an exasperated gesture.

"See here, Léontine, I have firearms; and if it were not that by killing you I should render myself a murderer in the sight of this angel, to whose purity your presence is an insult, I should shoot you dead at her feet. And I *should* have shot you if I had been alone with you in the street—I should have shot you if I could have thought this morning that you would guess my intention of coming here. It must have been Jean who betrayed me—the double-dyed scoundrel! Now, consider that my affianced bride has saved your life, and begone."

"That is your last word?" gasped Léontine, and there was nothing earthly in the hoarse tone in which she put this question.

"It is my last word. Begone!" And as if he feared to trust himself with the revolver, Victor threw it away from him on the sofa.

"I will begone," said Léontine implacably, "but you have not seen the last of me;" exclaiming which she darted the glance of a wounded tigress on Agathe; and, wrapping her cloak quickly round her, turned and fled down the staircase.

"I am lost!" exclaimed Victor, after standing for an instant motionless. "Concealment is of no use, Agathe; let me fly, for if they found me here you and your father might suffer."

"Yes, for God's sake fly, and at once!" shouted M. Marron, who had been an awestricken witness of the foregoing scene, but now felt his knees shiver at the thought of being held responsible for harbouring an insurgent. His enthusiasm for the Commune had sensibly declined now that that institution was on its last legs. "Yes, for God's sake fly!" he repeated. "Agathe, are you mad? Let go monsieur's arm!"

But Agathe clung to Victor with the desperation of death. "There is a trapdoor leading to the roof!" she cried in broken accents. "He can escape through there, and go over the leads to some other house!"

"The trapdoor is locked, and I don't know where the ladder is!" shrieked M. Marron, with a kind of panic-stricken gulp.

"Besides, it's too late!" exclaimed Aglae, running towards the window, white as a sheet. "There's that woman shouting outside, and I hear soldiers." Then the Communist fell into a sudden calm. His lips ceased to quiver, but his face was like a statue's.

"Good-bye, darling," he said, clasping Agathe in his arms. "After all, I was not worthy to possess you. One kiss—it shall be my absolution; and by-and-by try to think forgivingly of me."

Stooping over her, he pressed a burning kiss on her lips; then with a force greater than her own freed himself from her embrace and ran out. Agathe raised a heart-rending cry and endeavoured to follow him, but her father and Aglae held her back by sheer force. There was a hideous struggle of a minute's duration, and then Agathe, baffled, and locked into the drawing-room, sprang from Aglae's arms like a young cat, flew to the window, wrenched it open, and looked into the street.

It was pitch-dark, for the gas-lamps had not been lit that night, but the rays of two lanterns held aloft by men with drawn swords threw a lurid gleam on some hundred bayonets. The pavement on both sides of the way appeared to be covered with soldiers, and in the middle of the road was a group from out of which rose clear into the night words which fell like flakes of searing fire on Agathe's ears. A woman's voice was crying, "That is the notorious Colonel Fielot—he has 250,000 francs about him, the fruits of plunder!"

"It's true!" answered Fielot's voice. "Let me stand against the wall, and make an end of me quickly. I have nothing to say."

There was an instant's deliberation, then the group opened; and shadows seemed to flutter on the wall. A clump of men stood out clear in the glow of the lanterns, and in the luminous circle formed some dozen barrels uprose. Then something wild and terrible was enacted; for, just before the report of the rifles rang in the night-air, a second shadow rushed forward and blended itself with the first. A struggle ensued, and one shadow seemed to repel the other, but suddenly both dropped to the earth together, the woman embracing the man, and raving: "Oh, Victor, forgive me! . . . ."

VI.

There was, until lately, in New Caledonia a woman whose inscription on the register of the penal colony ran as follows: "No. 303,001: Agathe Marron. Sentenced to transportation for life for firing six barrels of a revolver at soldiers who had executed her paramour, Victor Fielot. This convict is an orphan. Her father, Adolphe Marron, and a servant named Aglae Dubois, who lived with them, were both shot under the impression that they were accomplices in the girl's act of vengeance. Agathe herself was not executed, owing to her extreme youth; hence her arrest. She has refused to answer any questions; but her behaviour has shown resignation."

One day Agathe Marron disappeared from the convict settlement; but whether she had escaped, or been drowned in the water between the Island of Pines and the Presqu'ile Ducos has never been ascertained.

A Visit to Münster.

"To Münster in Westphalia?" said an acquaintance of ours to whom we mentioned our design of visiting that place as a sequel to an Easter tour in Holland; "what an odd place to go to! I can conceive of no motive sufficient to attract any one there—except, indeed, one, and that is the interest connected with the Princess Galitzin." "Our very reason," we replied. We had, in fact, a fancy for realising the haunts amid which a somewhat remarkable coterie of thoughtful and pious personages pursued the tenour of their lives about a hundred years ago, just at that period when the ideas of bettering society, and giving freer scope to reason, and promoting sound education, were kindling the souls of the best sovereigns, statesmen, and philosophers—of Frederick and Joseph II., of Turgot, of Peter Leopold, and the "Utopisti" of Italy; according to a curious fact not seldom traceable in human affairs, the conspicuous advance of improvement just before some revolutionary crisis which, whether for outweighing good or evil, precipitates the process from an unexpected quarter.

Among the beneficent rulers who thus, to a certain extent, anticipated the rough teachings of the French Revolution, none deserve remembrance better, for the good they aimed at or effected, than Franz Baron von Fürstenberg, the Prime Minister of Maximilian Friedrich, Prince Bishop of Cologne and Münster. It was on account of Fürstenberg's fame as an educational reformer, that the Princess Galitzin, the *spirituelle* wife of the Russian Ambassador at the Hague, took up her residence at the Westphalian capital in 1779, and became the centre of a social sphere which touched externally on many varieties of life, and even attracted the sympathetic interest of Göthe, a thinker as different as possible, in his general tendencies and creeds, from the mild mystics of Münster with whom he loved occasionally to associate.

In a former article (November, 1871) we enlarged on the Princess and her personal history, and took incidental notice of him whom she was wont to call "the great man," and for whom she professed almost unbounded reverence. We propose presently to say something more concerning Fürstenberg and his administration—an administration which would doubtless have ensured for itself a more notable place even than it has done in German history, had not the convulsions of Europe changed the conditions of national life so rapidly and completely before its legitimate results could be worked out.

But, coming to Münster with the memories of the Princess Galitzin

and Fürstenberg in our head, we were attracted to the contemplation of other episodes in the historic life of the quaint old city. We thought of the *Vehmgericht*, the mysterious tribunal of Lynch-law justice throughout "Münsterland" in the early Middle Ages—a subject too abstruse, however, for chance discussion—of the Anabaptists, of the Peace of Westphalia, of Bishop Galen, the Prince Bomba of the seventeenth century; and, as we mentally glanced at the various aspects of the past, we experienced a sort of pleasure in the reflection that the place had not been made too common a present touring-ground through the seductions of Murray and Bradshaw.

For, if we are not mistaken, few travellers of the ordinary class make Münster a part of their expeditionary programme. It does not lie in the highway to anything. You must break your railway journey in order to approach it either from Holland, or from Hanover, or from the Rhine. We made our way to it from Utrecht, changing carriages at Arnheim, and again at a place within the German border. There is no charm of beauty about the surrounding country that people should care to visit it for its own sake. The plains of Westphalia, amid which Münster is situated, are flat and monotonous. There is wood, there is pasture, there is arable land, there is a belt of mountains in the far distance, there are small river-courses, there are numerous windmills, there are Westphalian pigs; but, as your engine puffs and grinds along the continuous level from Holland, there is nothing externally to arrest the attention till you come within sight of the city itself.

And here, having in our ignorance expected nothing but dulness in the outward aspect of things, our expectations were most agreeably disappointed. Münster presents a very striking memorial of the Middle Age and Renaissance periods of German street-architecture, and has much of the picturesque effect attaching to Nüremberg. In the chief street, or *Principal Markt*, the white houses are built over arcades, and have curiously graduated and ornamented gables. Their dates, carved outside, bear interesting testimony to the vicissitudes through which the life of Münster has been carried on. Next to a house bearing the year 1612 on its frontage, stands another proclaiming 1650 as its period of erection. Between these two lies the whole interval of the Thirty Years' War, when many houses in Germany were thrown down, but few built up. At first sight their style of presentment seems much the same; but look nearer, and we see in the debased rococo of the later edifice an unworthy imitation of the more solid columns and graceful outlines which mark the earlier. Opposite to these dwellings stands the *Rath-haus*, with its very picturesque outside dating from the fourteenth century. One of its chambers, the *Frieden Saal*, takes its name from the Peace of Westphalia, which was there signed and sealed in 1648, and contains numerous portraits and other memorials connected with that event. Another chamber, the *Rathhaus Saal*, has been fashioned and decorated within recent times, and on its walls are painted the figures of various worthies conspicuous in the annals of Münster. There may be seen the minister Von Fürstenberg,

and his friend the more famous minister Von Stein, who resided at Münster as Provincial President when Westphalia first became Prussian; Overberg, the Inspector of Schools, and Clement Augustus von Droste-Vischering, Vicar-General, and afterwards Archbishop of Cologne, whose name was noted in Prussian church affairs some five-and-thirty years ago. Among the local glories of the Renaissance a place must be assigned to the *Stadtkeller*, where once the wine stores of the city were deposited, and which is now used for the collections of the Art Union. The *Stände-haus*, situated in the Cathedral close, has been richly remodelled in modern Gothic, before which process it had served as the residence of Fürstenberg, and other leading men of Münster.

In the eighteenth century a great passion for handsome town residences seems to have beset the minds of the Westphalian nobility. Our early Hanoverian style is imposingly represented in the red brick mansions, with stone facings and high-slated roofs, which are known as the Merveldter Hof, the Erbdrosten Hof, the Beverförder Hof, also in the bishop's residence in the Dom Hof.

But to most persons the ecclesiastical edifices will seem to constitute the chief glory of the ancient *Monasterium*. The double towered cathedral was originally built at the period of transition from the Romanesque to the Gothic style of architecture. It has two short pyramidal spires, double transepts, low side aisles, a wide, heavy nave with broad spanned arches; and a curious "Paradise," so called, at the southern porch, adorned with Byzantine pillars and sculptures. Next in interest to the cathedral are the *Liebfrauen* or *Ueberwasser Kirche*, the *Ludgeri Kirche*, and the *Lamberti Kirche*. The latter occupies a fine position at the head of the *Principal Markt*, and is in the best Gothic style of the fourteenth century. Its tower, which bends visibly out of the perpendicular, is surmounted by a graceful spire. But as we gaze at it, we pause; what are those small objects, pendant from the spire like nests? We turn to our guide-book inventory, and we learn with something of a start and a shudder—for it brings the facts of a savage past time into weird juxtaposition with the calm investigations of the moment—that those are the identical iron baskets or cages in which, more than three centuries ago, were suspended the bodies of John of Leyden and his lieutenants Knipperdolling and Krechting, who for two years held Münster under Anabaptist rule against the beleaguering forces of the Bishop and the Empire.

For two years—from 1533 to 1535—this Münster, now the exercise ground of Prussian barrack officers and bureaucrats, claimed to be the Kingdom of Sion, the New Jerusalem; and Jan Bockelson, the fanatic tailor of Leyden, was its Monarch. It was a wild millenium that he presided over. All goods in common; polygamy in Mormonite excess; conflagration of all books of human learning; wholesale destruction of ecclesiastical images and ornaments; church pinnacles levelled to plant cannon, wherewith, and with well-constructed fortifications, a really efficient defence was in fact carried out. There were wild prophesyings

in the streets of Münster in those days: bacchanalian love-feasts, the "king" and his favourite wife, Divara, dispensing the bread and wine. Women flocked to the polygamous city; and nuns, throwing off their vows, were especially profligate and conspicuous. But at last there came scarcity. Friends from without—from Holland especially, where the Anabaptists were strong—tried to bring relief to the besieged; but Schomaker and his Frieslanders were met and crushed by an Imperial officer; thirty shiploads of sympathisers crossing the Zuyder Zee were overtaken and mostly drowned; an intended band of succour from Amsterdam was quelled by its fellow-citizens on the eve of its intended departure for the oppressed Zion. And so Münster grew more and more hungry. Useless crowds were dismissed from its gates; but John refused to hear of surrender, and cut off the head of one of his wives who ventured to counsel it—the sword is still preserved in the *Rath-haus* with which he committed the bloody deed. When treachery at last brought in the besieging forces, the reprisals were awful. John and his principal lieutenants were tortured with red-hot pincers, then executed; then hung up in those iron cages which we just now saw hanging from St. Lambert's spire. A strong military rule was introduced; two forts were built to hold rebellious spirits in check; an ecclesiastical reaction set in, and Münster, under its Prince Bishops, became one of the most rigidly Catholic cities in the Empire. But the energies of civic independence were not killed, and twenty years after the fall of the Anabaptists the inhabitants regained their old privileges and liberties from Bishop Franz von Waldeck, and gradually advanced in wealth and strength till the Thirty Years' War brought its desolations.

After the Thirty Years' War it was the special object of the petty princes of the Empire to stifle civic independence and to establish their local despotism *à la* Louis Quatorze—a task in which they were willingly seconded by the august potentate whom with one consent they made their model, and who was well aware that if his influence increased German nationality must decrease; and not only German nationality, but the personal authority of the German Emperor, his most formidable rival on the theatre of European politics. And so, from his ox-like dignity, Louis XIV. was well content to behold the imitation frogs on the other side of the river inflating themselves with French ideas and ambitions. The town councils and guilds of the Imperial cities meanwhile clung jealously to the privileges they claimed to inherit, till the forces of the time grew too strong for them. In the history of Bishop von Galen and his strife with Münster, we have these tendencies of the seventeenth century represented. Let us, while the spires and towers of the city cluster finely in yonder sunset glow, contemplate for a few minutes the stormy events of which it was then the scene.

Bernhard von Galen, treasurer of the Cathedral Chapter of Münster, was, on the death of Ferdinand of Bavaria (1650), appointed Prince Bishop of that city, separately from the Electorate of Cologne, which the late ruler had held with it. It was thought that the appointment of a

working member of the Chapter, and his appointment to the see of Münster alone, would benefit the city, inasmuch as its former bishops, holding other dignities and domains, had been absentees, and had been tempted to postpone the interests of Münster to Electoral and other claims. But it soon appeared that the Town Council of Münster and their new prelate had "views" reaching beyond the exigencies of the moment. Each side wished to establish its authority as against the other on the territory which the unsettled circumstances of the time had left debateable. Von Galen was a man of indomitable energy. He set to work at once to bring order into the state of local affairs, confused as it was by the long devastating war that had only just come to an end in the Peace Chamber of Münster. In pursuing this aim, he paid little heed to the constitutional rights of the burghers and civic officials; and the discontent he thereby aroused was assiduously fostered by Malingkrot, Dean of the Cathedral, and a disappointed candidate for the bishopric. Exasperated by the agitation, and aware of its principal agent, the Bishop resolved to arrest Malingkrot, and issued an "order" to the magistrates not to interfere with its execution. Now, constitutionally speaking, the word "order" was not one for the Bishop of Münster to use—he might only "entreat" the municipal functionaries of his capital; and so Bishop Galen was reminded, not a little to his anger. For the moment, however, he stifled his pride, and got the authorities to consent to a compromise, and to let his soldiers keep watch and ward over Malingkrot. But the factious dean gave his jailors the slip, and the townspeople became excited on his side; and finally the Bishop summoned the mayor and councillors to come to him at Coesfeld, twenty miles off, and give account of the uproar.

Manifestoes were now issued on both sides, and public attention, beyond the borders of Münsterland, began to be fixed on the affair. Meanwhile Von Galen set to work to organise a military force to serve him as *ultima ratio*. He did more, he concluded a so-called "alliance of the Rhine" with the Electors of Mayence, Cologne, and Trèves, and the Duke Palatine of Neuburg, for common defence against "possible attacks from without, and disturbances within." The magistrates on their side opened negotiations with the Swedes and the Dutch Republic. The Bishop tried to get possession of the city by stratagem; but as yet neither party wished for an open rupture, and the "Treaty of Schönfliet" (Feb. 1655) arranged that there should be amnesty for the past and a renewal of amicable relations between the pastor and his flock; only there should be an armed garrison within the city to "keep the peace" for them or between them; and in this stipulation lay the kernel of bitter antagonism. To whom should the garrison hold primary allegiance? to the Bishop or to the Town Council? In technical language, to which of the rival authorities did the *jus presidii* appertain? The citizens thought to outwit the Bishop by sending off a deputation to the Emperor and getting his sanction for their claim before the other side could be heard; but Bernhard was not long behind with his case for a counter claim. The Imperial Court, whose policy was comprised

in the maxim *dividi et impera*, saw its advantage in keeping both sides in a state of uncertainty, and postponing as long as possible the *fiat*, the anticipation of which held Bishop and Town Council in a state of wholesome subservience to its superior authority. A commission appointed to inquire into the Münster business, after eight weeks' discussion, referred its report again to the Emperor. And in December, 1656, Ferdinand's answer was that the city was to show further cause and advance better proof of its rights, if such it possessed, within six months; the Schönfliet compact to be observed meanwhile. Thus all was thrown back *in statu quo*; no decision given, though each side interpreted the ambiguous reply in its own favour, and proceeded to issue orders in direct mutual opposition. The situation was a dead lock. Alliances were sought for. Münster desired incorporation in the Hanse Bund, and endeavoured earnestly to secure for herself the support of Holland. The astute statesmen of the Hague dallied both with citizens and Bishop. The provincial nobility of Westphalia tried to mediate. But things had now gone too far. On Sunday, August 19, 1657, it was rumoured in the city that the Bishop and his allies were in full march towards the walls. A few days later the Christian shepherd's bombs were falling remorselessly among the homesteads of his flock. Now Bishop von Galen was a master in the newly-invented art of bombarding. Later in his life, when he fought the wars of Louis XIV. in Holland as a mercenary, he distinguished himself by his achievements in this line, and acquired the *sobriquet* of "der Bombenfürst." On the present occasion he displayed some choice elegances of his art. "One night in October," says a contemporary record, "the so-called 'stinking hedgehog' was thrown into the city; a firework composed of thick tow or knitted rope in the form of beehives, with thick iron rings and nails inside, glued together with pitch." A shell from this monster, we are told with curious particularity, fell at midnight into the Lorrainer Convent, and smashed to pieces a Franciscan Observantine brother, besides taking off the arms and legs of a Dominican. Another contemporary writes: "Inside and outside the city one heard and saw nothing but smoke and steam, horrible thundering from the cannons and mortars. The cannon-balls and bullets, shells and bombs, flew like bees all about the city, and shattered everything in their way, so that, besides the two churches of St. Lambert and St. Martin, upwards of a hundred dwelling-houses were laid in ashes, and many persons, in trying to extinguish the fires, were either shot dead or grievously injured." The defenders, however, contrived to inflict considerable injury on the ranks of the besiegers; and when, after two months of reciprocal cannonading, negotiations brought the contest to a standstill, the victory was by no means unconditionally on the side of Von Galen. There was to be amnesty for the past. The garrison admitted into the city was to swear allegiance both to Bishop and Town Council until the *jus presidii* should be determined at the Imperial Court. Mutual promises passed between the two parties as to right of entry and observance of privileges; and in the beginning of December, 1657, Von Galen made his formal entrance

into the city with his body-guard of 200 horsemen and 100 foot, "all in chesnut-brown livery, in splendid order, and well armed, with his kettle-drummers and six trumpeters riding before them and making loud music." The *naïve* describer relates other formalities of the Bishop's reception, but adds: "Nevertheless there was no one who would bare his head before the Bishop as he sat in his coach, or utter a shout of welcome, the spectators herein showing the true Westphalian nature, which never can make a pretence of what it does not feel." Accordingly, though feasts were held, and the prelate was bland, and all "went merry as a marriage bell," we are not surprised at the remark of Von Galen's own historian Alpen, that "his reverence did not abide long in the city, forasmuch as the citizens were not disposed exactly as he could have wished."

In fact, having in the winter convened a diet to meet within its factious walls, which had not been so honoured for many years, a bone of contention soon appeared in the matter of the garrison, which the Town Council complained of as too large and burdensome: the reductions assented to by the Bishop were declared insufficient. Then Bernhard fulminated a reply to the burghers, stern and decided. The city privileges, he said, had to square themselves to the rights of the Prince, not the rights of the Prince to the privileges of the citizens. The Peace of Westphalia had secured the rights of the Prince. To him it appertained to decide whether danger existed to render a garrison needful, and in what degree. True, the Town Councillors might be heard, and give their opinion and advice; but to advise was one thing, to decide was another; and this last was no business for the Council. He then adjourned the diet from Münster to Coesfeld. Thus it was evident that the Provisorium was not likely to keep things long together, the Bishop being violent, ambitious, hating the civic authorities; the Town Council being mainly under the influence of the guilds, whose obstinate insistance on their communal privileges was by no means always measured by the legality of those privileges.

The death of Ferdinand IV. caused an interregnum in the Empire, during which the Electors assembled at Frankfort. The occasion was taken to renew and extend the "alliance of the Rhine;" but the admission of Louis XIV. as one of its members proved a stumbling-block to some of the bolder or more patriotic spirits, and even Von Galen held back for a time from joining it in its altered form. Leopold I. was elected Emperor in July, 1658. A year afterwards the long-desired decision was given by the Imperial Court in the affair of Münster. It proved unfavourable to the city, which, it was said, had failed to prove its title to the *jus presidii*; the command over the garrison was therefore the exclusive prerogative of the Bishop. In vain the magistrates sought to interpose legal obstacles and delays to the fulfilment of the decree. In vain they renewed their endeavours to obtain the promise of help from the cautious States-General. "If the oppressed citizens could get no hearing in Holland," exclaimed one of its agents at the Hague, "they would turn to the Swedes or to any other quarter whatsoever; for they would rather be under the

Turk or under the Devil himself than under the Bishop. Religion should be no obstacle to them." The States proposed a compromise, a "sortabel accommodement," as it was called in the diplomatic language of the time, by which the *jus presidii* should still be left practically an open question between Bishop and town for twenty-five years, afterwards a new Imperial decision to be taken as definitive; but the general provisions of the proposed arrangement were unfavourable to the city, and the Council wrote back grandiloquently that the men of Münster would rather lose all their privileges, their possessions, aye and life itself, like the Numantians of old, than willingly submit to so shameful a decision, since they were neither convinced nor conquered—*non convictos nec devictos.*

The Bishop made his preparations for renewed war. The Emperor tried to bar his violent proceedings; but Von Galen well knew that his promise to aid his Majesty with 2,000 men against the Turks was sufficient safeguard against dangerous displeasure from that quarter. To the remonstrances of the States-General he replied that "he did not trouble himself about the doings of the Dutch Republic, and the Republic need not trouble itself about his." But he now saw fit to overcome his scruples as to joining the remodelled Rhine alliance, and allowed its new and dangerous member, Louis XIV., to send him military aid under the Marechal de Fabert. His operations against the city began in July, 1660. This time he sought to reduce it, not by bombardment, but by blockade. The process proved effectual. As winter came on, scarcity was felt in the city, and with the scarcity came storm and tempest. Such a convulsion of the elements had never been witnessed in Münsterland as took place on December 18, when the biggest trees were uprooted, houses unroofed, and the streets deluged with the overflow of the river. On New Year's Day, 1661, a deputation was sent out to sue for peace. It was of no use now to stickle for terms. The spirit of the Münsterians was fairly beaten, and they accepted all the Bishop's conditions, amounting to unreserved surrender on their part. Thus, in Alpen's words, "was the authority of the Prince confirmed, the Cathedral Chapter and knightly order exalted, the citizens humbled." And henceforth Münster lost its importance as a flourishing self-supporting Commune, and became nothing more than a provincial capital. Bishop von Galen, to make things sure for the future, erected a citadel and strong fortifications. His own career continued to be martial. He assisted Louis XIV. with a large mercenary force in that monarch's war against the Dutch, and enhanced his sinister fame as the Prince of Bombarders. But in justice to him it must be said that he really sought to benefit the condition of his people of Münsterland, and in particular extended and improved the system of education, taking care that the teachers should be well paid by the State, and that the children of the poorer classes should have their learning given them gratuitously. Von Galen died in 1678. His monument, a kneeling figure in a perruque, with hands raised as though

For past offences to atone,
By saying endless prayers in stone,

is to be seen in the chapel behind the high altar in the Cathedral, with the apt epithet inscribed, "*hostium terror.*"

A hundred years pass away. Other times, other men. To the era of Louis XIV. has succeeded the era of Frederic II. Franz von Fürstenberg rules Münster as Prime Minister for the Prince Bishop Elector of Cologne; an enlightened man in an age of awakening philanthropy. As Galen had succeeded to the heritage of the Thirty Years' War, so Fürstenberg succeeded to that of the Seven Years' War, which came to a close just as his ministry was commencing. The devastation occasioned in Westphalia by the contest had been enormous. The public debt had increased by two-thirds and more; large contributions had been exacted from the inhabitants by the contending armies; the city of Münster, thanks to Bishop Galen's fortifications, had been repeatedly besieged — large parts of it were laid in ashes. One of Fürstenberg's first acts—carrying out the stipulation made by the Provincial States with Bishop Maximilian Friedrich on his election—was to demolish the citadel and other works, which had been only provocative of attack and military occupation. This measure, besides relieving the city of a large sum for keeping up the defence, threw into the hands of Government, grounds and materials for the extension and embellishment of the city. The citadel was eventually transformed into the handsome *Schloss Garten*, and pleasant promenades replaced the fosses and ramparts of the previous century. A residence-castle was built for the Bishops, whose habitual absenteeism had hitherto found an excuse in the want of any dwelling-place fit to receive them in their Westphalian capital. To restore order into the condition of the finances was an arduous undertaking. In nothing were the resolution and insight of Fürstenberg more conspicuous. He instituted a fund for the liquidation of the public debt, based upon a graduated capitation tax, carrying out his project in the teeth of vehement opposition from the secondary clergy. By the sale of waste lands he assisted towards the liquidation of the debts contracted by separate corporations; for scarcely a township or a benefice was without its burdens contracted during the war. He considered that the prosperity of the country rested more on the ready circulation of money than on its actual amount, and accordingly encouraged by Government premiums every outlay on the part of capitalists for th building of houses, cultivation of land, or promotion of trade. His efforts to restore public credit proved so successful that in a short time it was said money could be got at a lower rate of interest in the diocese of Münster than in any neighbouring territory. To agriculture and to the linen manufacture of the country Fürstenberg paid assiduous attention. The flat lands of Westphalia had been allowed in a great measure to lie desolate for want of energy, enterprise, and, above all, of peace. The roads were positively dangerous, and some said could never be otherwise, from the nature of the ground, unless roofings were erected over them to protect them from the weather! Now Fürstenberg was less anxious about improving distant road communications than about other reforms. The sandy highways to Holland were sufficiently passable, and secured what had always been the

chief outlet for Westphalian produce; and for the rest he thought the Westphalians were more likely to be safe, whether from invasion or foreign corruption, the more difficult of access their country was. Still he readily promoted what he considered needful schemes for facilitating internal communication. He had a more radical reform in view when he entertained the project of abolishing the whole system of serfage, which held the labouring population of the country in degradation and ignorance. Of this benevolent project he was only able to effect a part; but all the dependants on the church estate were made free men; and, where serfage continued to exist, provisions were introduced by a new law, greatly modifying the absolute power of the masters over their dependants. While promoting the arts and interests of peace, there was no public concern of his country into which Fürstenberg threw himself with more hearty zeal than into that of its military organisation. He had not thrown down Bishop Galen's fortifications from any romantic idea that peace would be secured by the sight of unarmed confidence in the goodwill of mankind. The best defence of every nation he thought was in its men; a population trained to the use of arms and to patriotic feeling, constituted better panoply than stone walls. He laid down the principle that every man in the country was liable for its military defence; he has, in fact, the merit of having been the original deviser of that Landwehr system which was afterwards taken up and so vigorously carried out by the Prussian Government. In connection with these military ideas he fostered the cultivation of bodily gymnastics, and founded a military academy which it was one of his greatest amusements to inspect. Another of Fürstenberg's institutions was a medical academy; for the bad condition of the healing art attracted his many-sided attention, and made him eager to check the prevalence of quackery and superstition. At the head of this establishment he placed Dr. Hoffmann, a physician of considerable celebrity in his time. We pass over his reforms in the administration of justice, and others of his beneficent deeds, to bestow a few words on what was the greatest, or at least proved personally the most enduring, of his agencies—his service to the cause of education.

Popular or primary instruction, at the time Fürstenberg entered on his ministry, required not so much extending as methodising. There were numerous village schools throughout the province, partly supported by local rates, partly voluntary. He desired to combine and to economise. Fewer schools, better arranged and with better paid teachers, not exclusively ecclesiastics; a normal school from whence the teachers should be taken; these were objects to be aimed at. To carry out his system of school inspection and to preside over his training institution, he was fortunate in securing the services of Bernhard Overberg, a parish priest of Everswinkel, near Münster, a man of enlightened piety and unsparing zeal; to whom it was chiefly owing that in the subsequent times of continental war and revolution, when primary educational institutions were generally neglected or overthrown, those of Münster held up their head almost alone. Every year during those troublous times examinations were

held throughout the province, and vacancies filled up; Overberg presiding and controlling all discordant elements by his patient wisdom.

The Gymnasium of Münster was considered by Fürstenberg as the foundation-stone of all the higher-class education. He found this institution entirely in the hands of the Jesuits, and tied up to their formal and conventional system of instruction. The German language was entirely neglected; mathematics and psychology, history and geography, scarcely less so; grammar and rhetoric were taught on vicious principles. Now Fürstenberg had, with all the stirring spirits of his time, imbibed the awakening interest in a national literature and in scientific truth. He put it to the Jesuit authorities of the Gymnasium that they must either adopt new methods of instruction or give up their institution into other hands. As it happened, this was the moment when the Jesuits were tottering to their fall; and the Bull of Pope Clement XIV. issued in July, 1773, soon relieved the minister from any embarrassment that might have been caused by their educational superintendence, besides putting at his disposal large funds for working out his reforming designs. Fürstenberg called the remodelled Gymnasium his "own child"; and the elaborate programme which he drew up for its management, though framed with the concurrent advice of Sprickmann and other competent counsellors, reflected in a notable manner the character and principles of its chief author. At a time when the subject of education was making a considerable stir in the world, and many schools were being founded or reorganised, the Gymnasium of Münster excelled all others in the completeness and sagacity of its constitutional legislation: in fact, it may be considered as the model result of educational effort in Germany in the eighteenth century. Wide as were the minister's aims for all sorts of culture, he made religious training the cardinal point of his system; but it was to be religious training on the basis of conscience and tolerance. He desired that young men should be brought up as "reasonable" Christians; neither as heathenish philosophers nor as superstitious children. He was himself a loyal Catholic; but he tolerated and loved good men of all persuasions, and desired that, in view of the encroaching scepticism of the age, believers in Revelation should be able to render an intelligent reason of the faith that was in them. In his affectionate and earnest exhortation to make the sense of religious responsibility and the feeling of love to God the incentives to all moral and intellectual effort, we are reminded forcibly of the spirit and example of our great English pedagogue.

Another of his achievements in the cause of education was the reorganisation of the Münster University. The idea of extending this institution—hitherto devoted, under Jesuit management, to the faculties of Theology and Philosophy only—so as to make it a comprehensive University on the most liberal modern principles, Fürstenberg was not the first to entertain. The warlike Von Galen had cherished some such scheme. Fürstenberg looked about for means wherewith to proceed, and found them in the confiscation, by Electoral decree, of the property of the useless nunnery attached to the Ueberwasser Church. The University on its

new plan was opened in the year 1780. Fürstenberg continued to be its "Curator" till the year 1805, when he laid down his office on account of his advanced age. The University then underwent new modifications under Prussian rule, to meet the altered requirements of the times. With the mention of the Seminary for priests which he also instituted in Münster on improved principles, we close the catalogue of Fürstenberg's principal achievements in the cause of education. He was himself not merely a legislator from outside. He loved learning for its own sake. He was an adept in mathematics and in military science, a skilled Latinist, a lover of history, and a sagacious inquirer into its phenomena. He loved to attend the classes in the Gymnasium, examining the answers and exercises of the students, suggesting themes, dispensing praise or blame. Amusing stories used to be told of the good minister's absorption in the prevailing interest of the moment. Sometimes he would take the book from the teacher's hand, and give the lesson himself; and perhaps enlarge upon it with such entire forgetfulness of anything but the subject itself, that he would commend the progress of the class when it was over, while really no voice had been heard but his own! If he happened to be present during the delivery of the religious lesson, he would often feel and speak so earnestly that his hearers were moved to tears.

The great disappointment of Fürstenberg's life, and the cause of indignation to his friends, was his failure to get appointed coadjutor, and therefore effectively successor, to the Prince Bishop Maximilian Friedrich in 1780. The superior interest of the House of Austria carried the election in favour of the Hapsburg Archduke, Maximilian Francis. But the new ruler was virtuous and enlightened, and appreciated Fürstenberg's rare merits and capacities; and the late Prime Minister, though he could no longer hold the post which the indolence and infirmities of Maximilian Friedrich had made one of almost absolute power in his hands, was too magnanimous to retire in disgust from the affairs of the diocese. The office of Vicar-General was still left him, together with the direction of educational affairs; and for the rest of his working life he devoted himself, only with the more undivided zeal, to that department which had already engaged his keenest interest. In conjunction with Overberg, he spared no pains to energise and improve the schools and their administration; and he would often make journeys to other parts of Germany, to extend his experience by varied observation.

In those journeys he was wont to be accompanied by the Princess Galitzin and her *cortége*. The fast friendship which had sprung up between the "Christian Aspasia" and the Westphalian statesman was by no means influential on one mind only. Fürstenberg, receptive as well as dogmatic, learnt much from the cultivated female disciple of Hemsterhuys, and moreover was brought by her into connection with many thinkers of divergent views and opinions, who would scarcely have crossed his path otherwise. If often abrupt and positive in his intercourse with them, none the less was he loved and reverenced by all who came within

his sphere; and when he finished his long life on September 16, 1810, in his eighty-second year, the regret felt at Münster was deep and general.

And now let us for a brief moment record that pleasant April evening, when, intent on reviving the memories of Amelia von Galitzin, we drove to the village of Angelmodde, situated about three miles to the south-east of the city, first along a solid causeway raised above the flat cultivated land, then through byeways of such encumbering sand that the driver could only get on at a foot's pace. An hour's leisurely procession brought us to the church, an old but unimpressive edifice, on the white stuccoed south wall of which we found the stone monument erected to the Princess by her friend and confessor Overberg. Inquiring at the little hostelry hard by, the farm-house was pointed out to us where she was wont to spend the summer months in her hired apartments; and thither we strolled across a couple of fields. It is an old building, and bears over the back entrance the arms and inscription of the Count de Merveldt, to whom it belonged. The back spaces of the house are occupied by stalled cattle; the front looks out on the little river Werse, with a pleasant garden between, and the meadows along which the Princess and Hemsterhuys used to walk, discussing Platonic problems, and furnishing material for the philosophical "Dialogues," which the sage of the Hague afterwards put into literary form.

During the rest of our short stay in Münster, we were much occupied in identifying the Princess's town residence. We found her memory fresh in the city, but the directions as to her former whereabouts were at first difficult of comprehension. The "frühe Ascheberger Hof" is in one of the least attractive streets of the city—the *Grüne Gasse*; but the Princess loved to dwell among her poor, one of our informants told us. It is now divided into three dwelling-houses, the central compartment being occupied by one Wolff, a baker. Once it was the residence of a noble Westphalian family, who afterwards migrated to a better spot. At the back lies a spacious garden-ground, now in the hands of a Jesuit establishment, whose modern chapel stands over a part of it. We thought of Hamann, the "Magus of the North," and the nocturnal burial of his remains, in 1788, at which Fürstenberg assisted, and which scandalised the people of Münster, to whom the sentimental mysticism of the Princess was a conundrum.

And we visited the cemetery of the *Ueberwasser Kirche*, so called, the cemetery which lies outside the *Neu Thor*, where rest most members of the Münster coterie, excepting the Princess herself—Hamann, removed from the garden of the Ascheberger Hof to a more befitting place, Overberg, Katercamp, Sprickmann, and the great and good minister himself, on whose monument, situated near an exalted crucifix in the centre of the cemetery, we read, "Hier liegt zu den Füssen des Gekreuzigten, seiner und unser aller einziger Hoffnung, der Vater des Vaterlandes und des Armen Freund, Franz Friedrich Wilhelm, Freyherr von Fürstenberg zu Herderingen," &c.

Don Quixote.

"If," said the Curate in that priestly scrutiny of the library of the Cavalier of La Mancha, "I find here Ariosto speaking in any other tongue than his own, I shall treat him with no respect whatever; but if he speaks in his own language, I shall set him on my head."

"I've got him in Italian," quoth the Barber, "but I don't understand him."

"Nor would it be well, my son, that you should," replied his spiritual father; "and we ourselves would not have found fault with the Captain if he had never brought him to Spain, and turned him into a Castilian, for he has deprived him of much of his natural excellence by so doing."

How much of his natural excellence Cervantes has been deprived of by his own particular "Captain," the worthy John Stevens, and others who have brought him to England, it would present a tedious problem in addition to determine. He has been treated worse by his exegetists than ever his hero was by those *desalmados Yanguéses*, and he gained more honour in the huts of the goatherds than he has since in any English harbour. Enlarged, contracted, altered, abridged, adapted, mutilated, or, as the slang goes, "expurgated," this second Theseus or Hercules of a more modern world is turned into a contemptible dwarf or drivelling idiot. Seen through the dark glass of translation, often doubly dark, as the adaptation in English of an adaptation in French, *Don Quixote* is *Don Quixote* no more. Perhaps, as Voltaire said of *Hudibras*, the book is *introduisible*, and his translators have aimed at the impossible. At any rate, *Don Quixote* suffered no hardships so cruel as he has undergone at the hands of the majority of those, about whom it is too often a question whether they know less of the Spanish tongue or of their own. He was unconcerned in the memorable sally on the mill-stream; he remained unmoved in sight of the floury faces of those many demon-millers; but would he remain so, could he now see himself in the sentences of Motteux? He suffered, not for his own fault, but through the envy and deceit of evil magicians, enchantment in that cage where he was mocked by the world, because he came on earth too late, after Astræa, the last of the gentile angels, had left it for heaven; but could all the Magi of Persia, the Brahmans of India, and the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia change him as he has been changed by Jarvis? Cervantes made the book of the *soi-disant* Avellaneda the diversion of devils in hell. To what purpose would he have devoted the highly original histories of Smollett and of Smirke? In the very newest cloth woven out of that old story of the maimed hero of

Lepanto, idleness or incapacity has left unsightly knots where it has not left less unsightly holes, as in that fabric produced under the auspices of Mr. J. W. Clark, M.A., in which the perhaps inimitable tirade of Altisidora against the unfortunate Cavalier has been, without any defence or explanation, entirely omitted.

"My book," said Cervantes, "is so easy that none can find any difficulty in it; it is thumbed by children, understood by men, and celebrated by the old." Cervantes credited his readers with too much knowledge—even those of his own country and of his own time. How much those of another land and a far later period stand in need of assistance, it will be needless to explain to anyone who has made the "Ingenioso Hidalgo" an object of any study. Many men, more or less able, have offered their aid—the learned Vicente de los Rios, the laborious John Bowle, the ingenious Antonio Pellicer. Take as an example of the careful minuteness of the last his criticism of the title, the second word of the title, "Ingenioso," which, he says, should not be applied to the Hidalgo, but to the book. It is evident, however, from the epigraphs of the second chapter and of the sixteenth, and the conclusion of the second part, that the author intended the term "Ingenioso" to be applied to his hero. "But," says Clemencin, himself an ingenious critic, "'Ingenioso' seems scarcely the correct word to apply to a madman, and if it applies to the book, it argues ill of the modesty of the author."

Whether or not "la lengua Castellana es una lengua muerta," as the Spanish writers *de la vieille roche* affirm, and therefore the proper intelligence of such men as Garcilaso, Cervantes, Calderon be a study like that of the classics, it seems still certain that there are many forms of speech, especially proverbial, occurring in the subject of this article which cannot be understood by the scholar in modern Spanish alone, but for the explanation of which recourse must be had to the assistance of Horozco y Covarruvias; not to mention those words which, like the Asturian "argado," are provincialisms.

Don Juan and the chaste Lady Adeline Amundeville

> . . . studied Spanish
> To read *Don Quixote* in the original—
> A pleasure before which all others vanish.

But if their studies were attended with any success, which is extremely doubtful, seeing that Venus rather than Saturn was dominator over their desires, and that even almighty love is but of little assistance in learning those irregular verbs, they must have consulted other lexicographers than Baretti, Higgins, and Pineda.

We take a single instance of what has been said concerning translations in the mouth of one or two witnesses:—

"Duelos y quebrantos" a phrase occurring at the beginning of the work, by which Cervantes describes his hero's food on Saturdays, means, according to the Dictionary of the Spanish Academy, a composition of eggs and brains, *ex ovis cerebrique medullâ frixus orbiculus*; but, accord-

ing to that of Caballero and the commentary of Clemencin, a kind of *olla* made of broken bones and the remains of cattle which had died in the manner nature intended, eaten in La Mancha on Saturdays, because no other kind of meat was then allowed—*duelos*, to indicate the grief of the owner of the dead beast, and *quebrantos* to signify the condition of its bones. This custom of abstaining from other flesh on Saturdays originated, we are told, with the *Triunfo de la Santa Cruz* in 1212, and was abolished towards the middle of the eighteenth century by Pope Benedict the Fourteenth.

Now let us look at the various interpretations given of this phrase, where it is not wholly left out, by some of the numerous "translators" of Cervantes' immortal work.

First, it is deemed by an enterprising but reckless Dutchman to mean "een stokvisch." Thomas Shelton, who translated the whole of *Don Quixote* "in the space of fortie dayes, through the importunitie of a very deare friend that was desirous to understand the subject," gives us "collops and egges." Next the worthy Captain Stevens, who satisfies himself in his preface with "being beforehand in railing at those that should make bold to rail at him," copying Shelton, as he usually does, gives likewise "collops and eggs." Peter Motteux presents "scraps and penance" without any note to explain the nature of this extraordinary collation. Jarvis, the author of that deathless rendering of *yo trompogelas*, "and I tear on," says "an omlet." But *aun la cola falta por desollar*. Dr. Smollett is equal to the emergency, and gives "gripes and grumblings," with a note conceived in the style of refined wit which distinguished that reverend prelate. Lastly, in Cassell's magnificent edition of Doré's plates, we have from Mr. J. W. Clark, M.A., "griefs and groans," again probably the very worst attempt at translation of them all, presenting neither the sense of the author nor, as far as ordinary intelligence can soar, any sense at all.

Instances might be given, filling two or three volumes of this magazine, of these melancholy mistakes. But enough has been said; other fresh fields and pastures new await us. With regard, however, to the translations, appearing, too often, like the devil and St. Elmo, only to give pleasure to those who have not seen them, if this essay serves no other purpose, it will, at least, save a vast amount of reading, which writers who aim at exactitude are unwilling to forego, and of which often their only profit is the unhappy knowledge of its uselessness.

There are readers of *Don Quixote*, as of the Book of Job, who deny the proposition (which one would imagine was almost an axiom) that it is of very little use to read what we do not understand. For them it would be idle to explain that the "parting of the sun," which occurred in that monstrous and unequal battle between him of La Mancha and the lackey Tosilos, in the defence of the daughter of the Dueña Doña Rodriguez, was a universal practice, according to St. Palaye and other writers on the History of the Chivalry, to prevent one party ob-

taining an unfair advantage. Equally fruitless would it be to show that when Don Quixote led the Duchess's palfry by the bridle *de puro cortes y comedido*, he was but following the knightly example of Henry of Castille in the case of his sister, the Infanta Isabela, and of those officers *del Quitamiento* of Cervantes' own time, who held by cords of ruby silk and gold the *acanea* (hackney) of Margaret of Austria, the Queen of Philip III., when she made her public entry into Valencia. Some readers, however, of another sort would be glad to learn that Milan is introduced by Cervantes, as the mart of fashion in his time, into the story of the captive who went thither from Genoa to furnish himself with fine clothes—*algunas galas de soldado.* We know from this that Lombardy's capital preceded France as the court and emporium of fashion.

Even the object of Cervantes' satire has been misunderstood, and it has been declared that he intended to put an end, not to the absurd romances written about it, but to knight-errantry itself, a thing which had expired, as Mr. Ford says, a century before his birth. The esoteric object of his work was, doubtless, to show that the deeper, the truer, the less coarse and the more pure a nature is, so much the more will it become the jest and butt of this world of ours. Thus Charles Lamb has truly said that readers who see nothing more than a burlesque in *Don Quixote* have but a shallow appreciation of that immortal work. Was not Byron, too, of opinion that the "too true tale" was intended to show the hopeless absurdity of all efforts to redress wrongs and prevent rather than punish crime—

> Of all tales 'tis the saddest, and more sad
> Because it makes us smile.

Vulgar readers see only a book productive of merriment and laughter in that which is also a profound and luminous treatise on morality. Its hero wages war against windmills, but equally against the wickedness of mankind; he is as indignant against the injustice of society as against the soldier puppets of Maese Pedro. A pathetic picture is shown us of the result of the endeavours of a good man to ameliorate the condition of humanity. But philosophers might, as it has been said, with only too great truth, as well attempt to stop the fall of the waters of Niagara, on the ground of impropriety in the noise of the cataract, as to make others see the Cavalier of the Lions, *siempre cortes y comedido*, with such eyes as theirs.

When Cervantes began his work, he probably intended little more than an attack on the chivalric literature of his land, as indeed he hints in his preface:—"Vuestra escritura no mira á mas que á deshacer la autoridad y cabida, que en el mundo, y en el vulgo tienen los libros de cavallerias . . . . . á derribar la maquina mal fundada destos cavallerescos libros aborreados de tantos y alabados de muchos mas." These books Cervantes himself, by the way, must have read, or he could scarcely have applied them. But he soon began to take an interest in and an affection for the children of his understanding—the brave warrior

who fought against the Turks at Lepanto, the mutilated slave of Algiers, leaves Amadis, Esplandian, and Platir, whose resplendent motto was ever "Dieu, l'honneur, et les dames," to portray the character of a good man, who endeavours, at his own expense, to subjugate vice and exalt virtue; apart from which idle day-dream, he speaks "well enough," as Sancho says, "for a parson." So the new character, Sanson Carrasco, in the second part, is but the incredulous sceptic who laughs at everything, and has little to do with the original conception of the purpose of the story.

We must look behind the veil of entertaining fiction with which Cervantes proposed to correct, and indeed succeeded in correcting, the fashionable affection for *los libros cavallerescos* which in his time was general in his country, if we would understand his subject rightly. But even to judge of the fabric of the veil, we must transport ourselves into those ages of semi-barbarism and obscurity in which security, the main end of human society, was unknown. The feudal vassals of those good old times levied black mail on the inoffensive wayfarers who happened unfortunately to pass by their fortresses, and maintaining with their sword the maxim that might is right, carried with them wherever they went crime, ruin, and confusion. The famous Trégua de Dios was an ecclesiastical attempt at reform, which contented itself at first with the prohibition of violence on Sundays, and afterwards included by degrees its secular sisters. By this was the duel admitted, among other more or less absurd legal evidences, in which the sword of the oppressor was admitted by justice to supplement the desperate deficiencies in his suit. This was evidently an attempt to reconcile might and right, too often as opposed as fire and water. By this was determined in Toledo, in the eleventh century, the precedence between the Romish and Mozarabic ritual emended by San Isidor. The Mozarabes—probably a corruption of Mixtiarabes—were the Christians who lived anciently amongst the Moors of Spain. Their ritual is still observed in a chapel of the cathedral at Toledo. The *Partidas*, or seven parts of the law of Alfonso the Wise, excluded the "duel" at the end of the thirteenth century. Even the Crusades were of advantage to social reforms; not that cruelty, robbery, and murder were by these lessened, but they were directed elsewhere. After them, the foundation of universities, the invention of paper, of powder, of the mariner's compass, and of printing, facilitated and multiplied social relations, and macadamized the way for the civilisation of Europe.

In that time, therefore, in which defenceless and oppressed innocence could only receive succour from private endeavours, how seductive is the portrait of a person consecrating himself to the alleviation of unmerited sorrow, wandering about the world at his own horse's own sweet will (for in this consists the spirit of adventure), armed with lance and buckler, ready on all occasions to show his prowess and shed his blood on behalf of the weak and unprotected! Such is the foundation of the interest excited by books of knight-errantry, built on those feelings of humanity which alone can inspire a lasting interest. If the knight-errant succeeded

in destroying those robbers who infested the highways, those giants in their machicolated towers, those spectres of the dusky cavern or the uncultivated field; if he managed to free maidens from dishonour, the guiltless from punishment, the prisoner from chains; if he could replace princes and princesses unjustly deprived of their ancestral thrones, chastise the usurpers, and fill the world with his fame, surely such a meeting of fortune and merit might well deserve common approval. Add to all this his private qualities of justice, generosity, sensibility, contempt of death, love of glory, loyalty, and above all good looks, and we have the *beau idéal* of that *Caballero Andante* who served as a type to so many ancient chroniclers.

The subject, taken, as we have said, from the meeting of the night of feudal anarchy and the morn of modern civilisation, was a good and interesting one, but it was spoilt by the ignorance and bad taste of those who treated it. They might have consulted the records of chivalry in the middle ages, passing over the somewhat faint border-line which divides history from romance, and made their heroes *sans peur et sans reproche* as those of that time; they might have taken from these their descriptions of arms, jousts, festivals, dresses and customs, touched on the *Cortes de amor*, in which gallantry and sentiment arose, and sentiment first was mixed with the sensuality of love—the troubadours, the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. They did nothing of this; on the contrary, they invented everything, as the Germans say, out of their inner consciousness, while each endeavoured to exceed the other in exaggeration, marvel, impossibility. Battles upon battles; tedious repetitions of the same journey or adventure, with but the names of the actors altered; gross errors in history, geography, and the particular customs of the ages and the nations they professed to delineate; mighty blows, incredible exploits; events disconnected and improbable, a confused mass of immorality and superstition—such is the bill of fare offered by those writings of chivalrous emprise of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They sprinkled with such want of discretion enchanters and necromancers, that they dulled the palate they had proposed to please. The youth of the period accustomed to such high-seasoned and savoury food regarded with supreme disgust the brown bread, somewhat stale perhaps, with which education so plentifully supplies the tables of adolescent hunger. But while this high-seasoned meat of histories baked in the oven of a heated imagination destroyed its intellectual, delicate cates of adultery and by no means coldly-concocted amours interfered sadly with its moral, digestion. Thus, to quote the irascible Captain, the writers of books of chivalry "debauched youth," if they did not infatuate old age, with their impossible impertinences.

Good men, however, were not wanting to such sad occasion. Diego Gracian and Fr. Luis de Granada amongst many others declaimed against this endemic pest of Spain. Don Carlos in 1543 made a law against such histories being printed or sold. But, in spite of laws and declamations,

the pest was not a whit abated. With that usual variance between precept and example, Don Carlos, at the time of prohibiting such books, delighted himself, we are informed, with perhaps the most monstrous of them, *D. Belianis de Grecia.* These prodigies were composed at first by proletariat hacks, but very soon, provoked by public favour, prouder competitors descended into the arena. Gerónimo de Huerta, the translator of Pliny, presented his *Floranda de Castilla*, and Don Juan de Silva y Toledo his *Chronicles of Prince Policisne de Boecia*, a work not to be outdone in absurdities by any of its predecessors.

Such was the state of affairs when Cervantes conceived the idea of banishing knights-errant from the literature of his land. *Ridiculum acri fortius ac melius plerumque secat res.* What Fr. Luis de Granada had not succeeded in doing with his sermons, nor the Emperor Carlos with the severest laws, Cervantes did with the dust of a little well-timed satire. But circumstances were in his favour. The names of Pulci, Boyardo, and Ariosto had become known. The last had been once or twice dressed in Castilian. The argument of the poet of Ferrara was continued by Luis Barahona in the "Tears" and by Lope de Vega in the "Beauty of Angelica." Both of these in different degrees succeeded in reproducing the defects, but neither reflected the richness, of their original. In the course of time the Muses of Castille became aweary of the French Paladin, and inspired Quevedo with his parody, the *Orlando Burlesco.* Again, at the beginning of the sixteenth century a powerful rival was born—the Bucolic literature, of which the Italian Sanazzar gave the first modern example in his *Arcadia.* The Portuguese Jorge de Montemayor introduced this taste by his *Diana* into Spain. He was succeeded by Alonso Pérez, Gil Polo, and Suárez de Figueroa, who, substituting rivers and meadows of flowers for rapine and murder, still preserved in their stories the presence of love which imparts ever new interest to the affection of the reader, as it contributes ever new colours to the fancy of the artist, and to which all who wish to be free of the great band of writers must offer the accustomed dues. Lastly, the *Decameron* of Boccaccio gave occasion to tales of romance, as the *Patrañuelo* of Juan de Timoneda and the *Selva de Aventuras* of Gerónimo de Contreras, or of wit, as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzman de Alfarache.* All these publications, satirical, pastoral, and romantic, were so many breaches in the strong wall which encircled that old affection for errant cavaliers. The strong wall was finally razed to the ground by a caricature of the company of Belianis in Don Quixote, and of those who worshipped that company in Sancho Panza. The amused reader forgets all that was generous and good in the subject of Cervantes' satire, and sees but the impertinent exaggerations of love and valour, the dangers attendant on their exercise, and their incompatibility with modern civilisation.

The triumph of La Mancha's Knight, who appeared in 1605, was complete. None other entered the field after him. *D. Policisne de Boecia*, printed in 1602, was the last book of the kind in Spain. His

brothers lie no longer in the silken laps of ladies, but serve only to collect dust undisturbed on the lofty and rarely visited shelves of ancient libraries.

Spain in the meantime spent hours of happiness over the pages of this incomparable parody, as fields enjoy the fertile influences of sunshine, rain, and dew, without any utterance of gratitude to the Giver. To this indifference in the commencement of the eighteenth century succeeded, as extremes succeed, the expression of unbounded admiration. Vicente de los Rios may be regarded as the chief exponent of this tardy recognition, in his analysis which prefaces the edition of the Spanish Academy in 1780.

It is not the object of this essay to attempt any eulogium on *Don Quixote*. Nor would the writer, were that his object, imitate the style of that enthusiast who asks "Who has not read it? who does not know it by heart?" Such observations as these appear, to use no stronger a term, injudicious. It is praised sufficiently to those who have read it by saying, "It is *Don Quixote*;" to those who have not read it—probably a very vast number—it would seem sufficient to say, "Inquire about it of those who know it well."

There is no book, except perhaps the Bible, so much and so little known. It is rarely studied and more rarely understood; it is a stock subject for quotation; its errors are overlooked, its difficulties ignored. Written in a popular style and of a legendary nature, the work of Cervantes very early became with the Catechism and the Lives of the Saints an integrant part of the intellectual household furniture of Castille. But as soon as it was generally understood that it had become the fashion even for the higher classes to praise him, that "glory and shame of Spain" soared above the range of criticism, and became apotheosized finally by Don José Mor de Fuentes, whose panegyrical preface in Baudry's edition, 1835, begins with Virgil's "Deus ecce Deus" and ends with calling Cervantes "el ilustrador del linage humano. Ignórase el paradero de sus cenizas." One would have imagined *à priori* that the various versions published at different times under the title of translations (*traditori traduttori*) would have removed the divine halo from the head of Cervantes as effectually as the birth of Christ is said to have discrowned Pan, and sent with sighing the parting Pagan genius affrighted, from haunted spring and dale never to return. The fact that they have not done so is a fair proof of that blind credulity which, perhaps providentially, induces those most to lean on the opinion of others who are least fitted to form an opinion for themselves. The force of faith has sustained, notwithstanding all these successive shocks of interpretation, the primitive opinion as to the infallibility and divine excellence of the work, and the present writer is well aware that he states a strange and heterodox opinion when he ventures to declare, in all humility, that to understand *Don Quixote* a primary condition is to understand the language in which *Don Quixote* is written.

Its two most notable defects, says the great Spanish critic Clemencin,

are the three sallies of the hero, which had been better one, and the want of connection between the two parts into which the fable is divided. Nothing, he thinks, remains in the first part to be explained in, and so carry on the curiosity of the reader to the second. Another defect of less magnitude is the absence of link between the episodes and the principal action. Public censure remedied this in the second part, published ten years after. But Cervantes appears to have retained his own opinion about the matter. In the field of his fancy we find wild flowers in abundance, but we look in vain for the exact and scientifically arranged parterre. Again, the chronology of Cervantes is a little confused; but how far was he from supposing that anyone would take the trouble to compute the number of the days of the wanderings of his protagonist, and find them to be exactly 165 days! Events of the reigns of Philip II. and Philip III. are made coetaneous; the book mentions the expulsion of the Moriscoes in 1610, and the publication of the *Quijote* of Avellaneda in 1614; and yet this very book claims to be a translation from an Arabic old parchment, already almost destroyed by the hands of Time, the devourer and consumer of all things—a parchment found in a leaden chest among the ruins of some ancient buildings. Anachronisms destroy truth in history and probability in fable. As Cervantes himself said, "So much better is a lie the nearer it resembles truth," and the perfection of writing consists in verisimilitude. In defence of these errors, Dido of the *Æneid* has been exhibited, but there a great lapse of time intervened; and in other respects the anachronisms of Cervantes are not to be compared with the anachronisms of Virgil. The geographical difficulties are many, but of trifling importance.

The severe criticisms of Clemencin seem but the reaction against such hyperboles as those of Mor de Fuentes, who concluded the preface before alluded to by calling Cervantes "el ilustrador del genero humano." Such a title might perhaps be applied to Homer or Valmiki, the traditional robber-author of the Ramayana. When the poet was the hierophant of humanity, such a panegyric might have been perhaps attached to such names as these. But in the seventeenth century—the century of Newton, Copernicus, Leibnitz and Descartes, the expression seems to verge on the hyperbolical. Clemencin loved *Don Quixote* much, but he loved syntax more; he has dismembered him as the Bacchantes dismembered Orpheus. He has gazed on the Venus of Milo through a powerful double convex lens, and mourning over the roughness of the marble, has given his preference to a polished porcelain doll. Analysis and grammar are the Muses who inspire his commentary. When La Dolorida speaks of Bootes as one according to report of the steeds of the sun, Clemencin utters a piercing cry. But Cervantes has been proved to have been well acquainted with the classics, notwithstanding his allusion to Bootes as one of the horses of the sun, and his citation of Horace under the name of Virgil, or *vice versâ*, by a wealth of learned quotation which reminds us not remotely of that Uncle Thomas of the Barber in *Gil Blas*, to whose keen genius and unwearied

research we are indebted for the information that in Athens babies wept when their mothers whipped them.

The learning of Cervantes, says John Bowle—to whose criticisms students of *Don Quixote* owe more perhaps than to any other single commentator—is apparent from several points of view—from his mention of that *caxa que halló Alexandro en los despojos de Dario*, which the son of Olympia deputed to guard the works of the poet Homer, and which the Curate introduces in the scene of the library, when he says that another chest like it should be made for Palma de Ingalaterra. This chest is mentioned by Pliny as a casket enriched with gems and pearls, in which the Shah was wont to keep his precious ointments.

In that lecture which the Hidalgo gave to Sancho on the love of fame, on his way to visit his lady Dulcinea, he mentions the swimming of Horatius Cocles across the river Tiber in his armour, a story which Cervantes seems to have taken from Florus or Livy. His quotation on the same occasion of Cæsar passing the Rubicon in spite of the omens has been referred to that of Suetonius—"Eatur quo Deorum ostenta et inimicorum iniquitas vocat. Jacta alea est;" but the expression, "contro todos los agueros" hardly agrees with this. Cervantes united to a remarkable conception almost equally remarkable carelessness, like his hero, wandering at will over hill and dale, content with any adventure that destiny allotted to him. He seems to have copied without method and without consideration all the fertile suggestions of his fancy, irrespective of unities of place or time—never waiting to read again what he had once written; never staying to examine an incorrect expression, or to remodel a manifest error. He worked less by reflection than by instinct. He created a style of composition. Of him that is true which Velleius Paterculus applied to Homer—that he found no one to copy, and no one to copy him. The most famous works of antiquity preceded instructive art; the precepts of Aristotle were posterior to the poems of the Ascræan sage, and the institutions of Quintilian to the rhetoric of the Roman lawyer.

The work of Cervantes presents a fair mirror of knight-errantry, but he has not in all places attended to its laws. For instance, *Las Siete Partidas*, before mentioned, whose codification was completed in the time of Alfonso the Wise, and commenced in that of his father, Fernando the Holy, which were made *siete* for the excellent reason that there were seven letters in the name of Alfonso, among some two dozen regulations respecting knights, says they cannot be created by one who is not a knight, or by any clergyman; which, of course, says a sagacious critic, militates against Don Quixote's creation by the innkeeper.

But such instances are few compared to those agreeable to such laws, or copied from books of chivalry; as when Sancho made light of his master's oratory in the matter of the fulling mills, and had received in consequence two strokes on the shoulders, which had they descended on that at which they were aimed, would have freed the Don for ever from

paying any salary unless to Panza's heirs, the Cavalier urges in apology of his conduct a sentence taken word for word from Carlo Magno, "Los primeros movimientos no son en mano del hombre." An apology which he repeats on another occasion, when Sancho's indignation was roused at his master's hesitating to marry that high princess, Micomicona; and he spoke certain blasphemies thereupon in reference to the peerless Dulcinea, for which he was incontinently knocked down.

Again, on that hunting day when the Duke gave Sancho a green hunting-shirt of the finest cloth, which that servant took, intending to sell it at the first opportunity, and which was afterwards torn in his frantic endeavours to escape from the tusked wild boar—on that occasion Sancho says that kings and princes ought not to set about killing an animal which had done nothing wrong. The Duke's reply is to be found in the *Partidas* of Alfonso above mentioned, in which we are told that hunting is more fit for a king than other men, for these reasons—first, to lengthen his life; secondly, because the chase is a kind of imitation of a war.

The challenge of Diego Ordoñez de Lara, mentioned in Don Quixote's harangue to the Braying party, who the knight said went too far in challenging the dead, the bread, the waters and the unborn, and other trifles of that sort, is taken almost word for word from the Chronicle of the Cid Ruy Diaz. It is the *escaño* of this Campeador, which the Chronicle tells us he gained in Valencia, which he used at dinner and for a bed, and which was covered with the richest cloth of gold, that the Duchess says Sancho is worthy of, in the notable conversation which took place between them; and in the same Chronicle it is told how Alfonso VI. gave the palace of Galiana to the Cid for his place of residence in Toledo—a statement which explains Sancho's wish that his master had fallen into the pit instead of himself, since the former "tuviera estas profundidades, y mazmorras por jardines floridos, y por palacios de Galiana."

The master-key to the work of Cervantes is Covarruvias, whom Bowle quotes with the remark:—"Parvum est profiteri per quem profeceris." His assistance, as a contemporary of Cervantes, to a translator is scarcely to be over-estimated; yet the translators seem in few instances to have cared to avail themselves of it. In that passage, for one instance out of many, where Thomas Cecial's nose is said to be *de color amoratado como de berengena*—of a mulberry colour like a mad-apple—the lexicographer gives a learned explanation of *berengena*, more frequently pronounced *verengena*, according to the proverb, *Hispanis vivere est bibere*. The word is connected with the Milanese *melangena*, a corruption of *mala insana*. After telling us that the fruit is called love-apple, not from its beauty, for it has none, but from its effects, he adds that one who eats much of it is not only troubled with these, but also its naughty quality shows itself in his face, which becomes of a livid and dark green colour. After this explanation, easy to seek and find, let us regard the passage in the light of our translations. Shelton interprets badly the first portion of the sen-

tence; but honestly, if a little obscurely, the second. He says:—"Of a darkish green colour, like a Berengene." Captain John Stevens leaves out the passage altogether—his never-failing resource in a difficulty. He is followed in so doing by many others. The edition of Mr. J. W. Clark, M.A., has "tawny as a russet pippin," which ingeniously introduces two mistakes into as many words; while Jarvis—the generally-honest Jarvis—contents himself with a translation of the former part of the sentence only, leaving the emphatic word without any representative.

One or two errata in editions in the original language have occasioned curious results. A variation of *castillo* for *costilla* has given us, instead of "he set spurs to the side of his mule," Shelton's "he set spurs to that castle his mule;" and may be assigned as a cause perhaps of the remarkable rendering in the edition of Mr. J. W. Clark, M.A., "clapped his heels to the overgrown mule's flanks." So the valiant *de Tirante*—a phrase like *el bueno de Sancho*—is metamorphosed into *Detriante*, in the account of his fight with the mastiff.

Homer sometimes nods, and where so many beauties shine, none but severe critics will be offended with a few spots, the result of carelessness or the human nature of Cervantes. Such are those of his placing Sancho on his dapple, soon after he had told us the beast was stolen by Gines de Pasamonte, and the misnomer of Sancho's wife, whom he names Juana Gutierrez in the seventh chapter, and a very few lines after Mari. Then in the fifty-second chapter he calls her Juana Pança "que asi se llamava. Pineda has here substituted Teresa in his edition of the text, but without any authority.

Faults, however, detected by one critic have been by another panegyrised as beauties. Sometimes Cervantes has not been understood, or, worse, misunderstood. In many cases irony has been mistaken for truth, and in many more, the great majority of cases, confusion has arisen from the primitive typography of the earlier editions. It is difficult to say to what extent alteration in this particular should be permitted; but if any is lawful, it seems no excess to go so far as to transpose a comma or semicolon, where a passage is thereby rendered natural and suitable to the context from being, if not unintelligible, obscure. Nor does the addition, substitution, or change of a letter seem of much moment, and yet an iota once divided the Christian world. But philological critics are too often a species of doctors professing to botch up the bodies of authors. To one they add a nose, to another teeth, eyes, arms, legs; but the worst of it is they are not contented with this, but must needs cut off fingers or hands, on the plea that they are not natural, and that it is better to have them like their nose and legs, all factitious and of a piece. The corrective criticisms of Aristotle on Homer are of another and a very different school.

We have said irony has been mistaken for truth. Of this antiphrasis we have an instance in the adventure of the fulling mills, immediately

before which great exploit Sancho determines, in his fear, not to leave his master till the conclusion of the enterprise. From this honourable determination, says the text, the author of the history concludes him to have been well born and at least a *cristiano viejo*. This appears to Clemencin, who never himself rows one way and looks another, a very improper phrase in the mouth of the Mahommedan Cide Hamete Benengeli. But the passage is to be understood ironically, or it may be interpreted "nothing less than a *cristiano viejo*." The commentator here reminds one of Panza, when he hears the Devil swear *en Dios y en mi conciencia*. "Doubtless," says Sancho, "this demon must be a good man and a good Christian, otherwise he wouldn't swear thus. Therefore it is plain there are good folks even in hell."

In that passage where Cardenio alludes to a certain impropriety that passed, as he affirms, between the Queen Madásima and the curer of souls and bodies, Maestro Elisabad, Clemencin gives a long note, showing that both Cardenio and Don Quixote mistook Madásima, who never had any relation with Elisabad, for the Infanta Grasinda, niece of King Tafinor of Bohemia, and lady of a city on the sea-coast called Sadiana, information for which he is indebted to the second part of the Chronicles of Amadis de Grecia. "But," adds Clemencin, "this mistake is the less to be wondered at, seeing that both the interlocutors were mad." The great commentator may be taken as a type of those who are perpetually seeing references to works of chivalry. On hearing the valorous resolve of his master about the fulling mills, Sancho weeps—a very natural thing for him to do. But Clemencin cannot let this sorrow pass without citing how Ardian, the dwarf of Amadis, wept and tore his hair and beat his head against the walls, when his master was for fighting with the Endriago; the squire Gandalin is also quoted, who went and did likewise. Nor are the prayers and tears of Lelicio forgotten, when Florambel de Lucea went in the boat which the lady of Fondovalle had sent him to the island of Sumida, which was girt about with a thick cloud and smoke, as of a furnace, from which lightning burst continually. But this greatest of Cervantes' critics concludes that, notwithstanding the *defectos notados* of grammar and of style, of inconsequence, contradiction, distraction, and obscurity, and innumerable others, the book "astounds, enchains, and enchants readers who do not perceive them or scarcely perceive them."

The abundance of merit in the invention and treatment of this admirable fable likens it to those famous pictures which, in spite of their faults, we cannot fail to praise. In some of those passages which have been obelized by Clemencin—we speak only of Spanish critics; to speak of others *eso seria nunca acabar*—Cervantes might be easily justified if the space of this article permitted it. Those difficulties which remain, admitting apparently of no defence, are but the spots on the sun, and may be excused by that αἱ ὑπερμεγέθεις φύσεις ἥκιστα καθαραὶ of the minister of the Queen of Palmyra. That which is everywhere accurate runs a

chance of being the reverse of sublime, which seems to require some degree of carelessness. Sublimity with a few faults is more effective than mediocrity with none. The average talent, never soaring very high, is less likely to become giddy and to fall. Nor are the faults of a great writer easily forgotten, left, as the Spaniards say in the inkstand. The memory of vices remains, while that of virtues fades; and one will more readily learn to remember the ridiculous than that which is wôrthy of reverence. It is the nature of mankind to observe the seasons of storm and tempest, and pass unnoticed all the smiling seasons of the year. The beauties of Cervantes, who shall tell them? Though, as Longinus said, the style of the poet Apollonius be without error, ἄπτωτος, yet who would not rather be Homer than Apollonius? "The *Erigone* of Eratosthenes," says the master of Porphyry, "is without blemish, and Archilochus is disordered, preposterous, from the working of that divine spirit, not easily submitting itself to human laws; but was the former for this reason the greater man?" Among the Lyricists was Bacchylides, he who wrote the travels of a god, preferable to Pindar; and Ion of Chios, called by Aristophanes the Eastern Star, among the writers of tragedy, to the supreme Sophocles? Yet Ion and Bacchylides were remarkable for the elegance and correctness of their compositions, while Sophocles and Pindar are here full of fire and there cold as snow. "Yet no sensible man," says Zenobia's unfortunate minister, "would presume to compare all Ion ever wrote with one single legend of Sophocles—the *Œdipus*."

Its very faults make *Don Quixote* natural. It is like the sun in heaven on a cloudy day, clear at intervals.

Laboured accuracy is not a desirable attainment. Compositions should rather resemble wealthy houses, where certain trifling expenses are considered unworthy of notice:—

> Exilis domus est ubi non et multa supersunt
> Quæ dominum fallunt et prosunt furibus.

"A few instances of inaccuracy or mediocrity," says Goldsmith, "can never derogate from the superlative merit of Homer and Virgil, whose poems are the great magazines, replete with every species of beauty and magnificence." It has also been urged against the work that it is destitute of plot. It certainly has none of the artificial intricacies of a modern novel, which too often subordinate the proper delight of the present page to a morbid curiosity concerning that which is to follow. But it seems none the less excellent for this than for the absence of those light dishes of love or dissipation which it has become the fashion to substitute for the poor and homely entertainment of a life undistinguished except by wisdom and by virtue.

An essay might be written on Cervantes as a moralist alone. "Desnudo nací, desnudo me hallo," repeats Sancho, with the patience and resignation of him from whose mouth these words originally came, in that pathetic apostrophe to his ass when he gave him, with tears in his eyes, the kiss

of peace upon his forehead. "Ah, dear companion of my labours, when I had no other care than that of feeding your little carcase, happy were my hours, my days, my years; but now since I have begun to scale the towers of ambition and pride, a thousand sorrows, a thousand toils, and four thousand pains have pierced my soul." No less excellent is the remark on that love in young men which is "for the most part nothing but appetite, which having for its end delight, in obtaining this ceases; while real love has no such ending." To the practical philosopher in the school of adversity are we indebted for such moral maxims as these:—"Seldom or never comes good pure and simple, but it is joined or followed by some evil which disturbs or exceeds it"; "Misfortunes ever track talent"; "Happy is he to whom Heaven hath given a piece of bread, without the obligation of thanking any other than Heaven itself." The hypocrisy of monks is well hit off in that question of Sancho's, "Do hermits keep hens?" These moths of the people, and sometimes worse, as the virtue-cloaked Don Rafael and Ambrosio Lamela of *Gil Blas*, were indeed but little resembling those of "the deserts of Egypt, who dressed in palm leaves and lived on roots." Sancho's wife, that woman of many names, utters a philippic against pride, as displayed in *hidalgas*, which reminds us of the "Baron" of Moratin. "They think because they're fine ladies the wind mustn't touch them, and go to church as if they were queens, and take it to be beneath them even to look on a poor labouring woman." In death we are all equal, for "the prince goes thither by as narrow a path as the day-labourer, and the body of the Pope takes no more room in earth than that of the sexton; we shrink willy-nilly at the pit's mouth to one proper size, and, good-night!" The whole foundation of the famous medical system of Le Roy is contained in "Dine on little and sup on less, for the health of all the body is forged in the foundry of the stomach."

"Sorrow was made, not for beasts, but for men; but if men give much way to it, they become beasts." This sentence, which, though somewhat of a riddle, seems to discourage the practice of looking at ills through a magnifying-glass, and recommends a man to stand the hazard of a leap out of window as a last resource when his house is on fire, may be compared with the advice of Krishna to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*—"There is nothing better for a man than lawful war," *i.e.* against distress.

Speaking of that vexed social question of the public and its plays, Cervantes says, in the mouth of his protagonist, "The fault is not in the former for asking absurdities, but in those who represent nothing else." "It is not necessary," he continues, "to speak as a fool to be understood by the vulgar;" and he thought with Yriarte that though, if you give the people straw it would eat straw, yet if you provide it with grain, it would eat grain. "An author's work who looks to money is the coat of a tailor who works late on the vespers of Easter Sunday—made in a hurry and seldom of much good." Yet, on the other hand, "sin provecho no vale un cuatrin la buena fama."

In the advice to Sancho on his taking in hand the reins of government, Don Quixote provides for the case of a Phryne being brought before the judgment-seat by another Hyperides of Barataria—"If any pretty woman seeks for justice, abstract thy eyes from her tears and thy ears from her lamentations, unless thou wouldst have thy reason drowned in her mourning, and thy morality in her sighs." What an excellent piece of cunning is this!—"Some wise man was of opinion that there was but one good woman in the world, and advised every married man to think she was his own, that so he might live well content."

Don Quixote is at first simply a madman. Sancho, a coarse peasant, seconding, sometimes through simplicity, far more frequently through self-interest, the extravagant sallies of his Señor. Soon, however, as we have said, Cervantes clothes his heroes with the raiment of his own reason and intelligence, bestowing on the master that judgment and charity which is the child of reflection, on the servant that limited but sure common sense which most men inherit as the appanage of nature. Poetry and prose are contrasted in the Cavalier of the Sad Countenance and the Father of Proverbs.

Like other reformers wise and virtuous, Don Quixote passes in corrupt and vicious society for a fool; he dreams of the possibility of obliterating lust, extinguishing anger, wiping out ambition, of doing good without the hope of reward—that pure morality of the Karma-Yoga system of Indian philosophy—of refraining from cruelty and wrong, uninfluenced by the fear of retribution. In short, he is a madman, and this his monomania. In other respects he is like other men. Sancho gradually develops from the idle rustic, whose day-dream it was to enrich himself with a few maravedis, into the clever knave. A brave sight it is to see these two, inseparable as the body and the soul, joined to whom, the Caballero del Verde Gaban, the representative of the man, forms a perfect Trinity. Sancho Panza, seldom unmindful of his saddle-bags; Don Quixote, always soaring into the sublime ideal, a noble madman doing wisely deeds of consummate folly; the one a follower of the Stoic Zeno, the other of the Cyrenaic Aristippus. Especially appear these traits in the second part, superior it may be in the judgment of the author to the first; but not so well received, from its want of ridiculous adventure, by the rabble, whose cry is continually "Panem et Circenses!" Retaining only as much of the satire of knight-errantry as is sufficient to bind it to the first, it is a treatise of practical philosophy, a collection of maxims, offered, it is true, generally in the guise of parable, which a wide experience has shown to be the most generally attractive, a judicious and sweet satire on humanity.

The name of Don Quixote has been in later times, by a species of metonymy, applied to that rare monster who is ready to undertake a virtuous but unfashionable course of action, uninfluenced by self-interest. So Diderot was the Don Quixote of philosophical insurrection. Édouard Fournier calls himself the Don Quixote of historic truth. But the world

has this consolation. Don Quixotism is becoming rare; for self-devotion, faith, and delicacy wane day by day. No ten thousand swords leap now from their scabbards to avenge even a look which threatens a woman with insult. She pursues her remedy at *Nisi Prius*. The age of chivalry is gone.

The historian Thucydides only mentions women once in the course of his work, and then to observe that it is their proper glory to be least spoken of among men, either for good or for evil. We have followed this illustrious example in not commenting on any of the female figures with which our author has enriched his canvas, yet it is difficult to avoid making an exception in favour of the foul Maritornes, who, with a woman's charity, when she sees Sancho bathed in sweat after the trouble of the blanketing of those needle-makers and others, gives him a cup of wine, paid for out of her own poor purse, and offers her humble prayer that his mad master may be restored to his right mind. Such a touch of humanity is presented to us in Sancho himself, whom it seems not well to suppose entirely self-interested. Not for the island only does Sancho follow his lord. Doubts about this island abound in Sancho; yet when his master proposes a separation, he says he has eaten of his bread and comes of no ungrateful race, that he is loyal and faithful, and that nothing but the shovel and spade shall ever part them.

The general tone of the work is not less characteristic than its conception. Sismonde de Sismondi thinks its style inimitable. "It is written," says Montesquieu, "to prove all others useless." It is full of profound meaning, set in the most sparkling and seductive words. It would be idle to refer any reader of this article to such well-known examples of rhetoric as the oration of Don Quixote to the goatherds about the golden age—that oration which he commenced with his stomach well satisfied and a handful of acorns in his hand, speaking of that happy time as Chrysostom speaks of heaven, "Ubi non est meum ac tuum frigidum illud verbum." It were all one to remind him of how Sancho profited by the occasion in his frequent visits to the skin which was hung from a cork-tree in the hot summer noon to cool. On all the language of the Cavalier of the Lions is graven the Hall-stamp of old chivalric gravity, in all his words we hear the rattling of the sword and the glittering spear and shield, and smell the battle afar off, but in those of Sancho we smell only the wallet's savour and the odour of the skin of wine.

Many translators, save the mark! have endeavoured to make the Don witty after their own conception of wit. They have succeeded in turning him into a buffoon. They look upon Cervantes' work as a comedy, ignoring, not perceiving probably, the intense sorrow of the tragedy beneath the surface. They are like a child which, pleased with gathering summer flowers in some country churchyard, cares little, or has not yet learned to think, of that which sleeps so deep and dark and silent below. By eliminating this element they ingeniously manage also to rid the story of that contrast of sadness of language and ludicrousness of situation which

is perhaps its most enduring charm. Our readers are well aware that Cervantes' protagonist was as partial to time-honoured terms as Rabelais to *bouquins de haute graisse*, but how seldom are we reminded of this keynote by the voices of his exegetists! His wit and words are modernized alike. Their Don Quixote is the Don Quixote of the comic opera, in three acts, of Barbier and Carré, which was represented a few years ago at the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris. Like the girl who disenchanted her lover with frogs and toads leaping from her lips, so Don Quixote somehow loses all his seriousness as soon as he begins to sing. He takes, so doing, the one step between the sublime and the ridiculous. The inflections of his voice are intricate, but his conduct is inexplicable. MM. Barbier and Carré have bound him to his *clavileño* as firmly as ever Mezentius fastened the living to the dead.

The episodes have been, as we have already observed, considered by some critics as useless *hors-d'œuvre*. With the single exception, however, of the "Curioso Impertinente," although not strictly necessary (how very little of any work is strictly necessary!) they are yet intimately connected with the general action. With this sole exception, the charming history of the shepherdess Marcela, of Dorothea, and of the nuptials of Gamacho, rise out of the story and make us well content to linger with their beauty, especially in a work whose interest is kept up by no unforeseen *dénoûment*, of which a lady's impatience would in vain consult the end to obtain in a few sentences the essence of the whole, but which one opens here and there as one opens the Bible, with a rare epicurean delight. Even supposing these episodes to be digressive, would any who has read them willingly let them go?

There are, of course, many imitations of *Don Quixote*, more or less bad. We shall only notice two—that under the name of "Avellaneda," and the *Spiritual Quixote*. This Alfonso or Fernandez de Avellaneda is without doubt a pseudonym. Most of the biographers, following one another with the touching enthusiasm of the sheep of Panurge, serving up for ever the same cold meat, give quite a pleasant little history of Avellaneda, as of one who really existed, and inspired by a devil make him a native of Tordesillas, the Turris Syllana of the Romans. But name and country are alike supposititious. The authorship of the work which was published between the parts of that of Cervantes has been attributed to four persons; to André Perez, the Dominican author of *La Picara Justina*, under the title *Fr. Lopez de Ubeda;* secondly, to Fr. Juan Blanco de la Paz, also a Dominican, a companion of Cervantes' captivity; thirdly, to Bartolomé de Argensola, surnamed the historian of Aragon: and, lastly, to Luis Aliaga, father-confessor of Philip III., and a favourite of the Duc de Lerma.

This work of the *soi-disant* Avellaneda was considered worth translation and improvement by Le Sage, who is of opinion that the character of Sancho is better sustained there than in the original. "Sancho," he says, "is always Sancho." He goes so far as to add, Cervantes'

Sancho "veut souvent faire le plaisant, et ne l'est pas; celui de Avellaneda l'est presque toujours sans vouloir l'être."

This family of Avellaneda, of whom the unknown author of the continuation of *Don Quixote* assumed the name, was not without celebrity in Old Castile. Ochoa de Avellaneda was a principal member. "Ochoa" is said in Biscayan to signify "wolf;" and a pair of these animals are the armorial bearings of the family.

The prologue contains the bitterest envy of Cervantes, clearly shown in a charge of envy against him, interlarded with quotations from the Saints Thomas, Gregory, and Paul, with unbounded admiration of Lope de Vega. It bears coarse cruel reference to the maimed hand of the soldier of Lepanto, who has, he says, more tongue than hands. Cervantes' work is full of anger and impatience, the result of composition in gaol. "I," says the author of a preface *menos cacareado*, "am of a very different humour"—he might have added, without fear of contradiction—"and of very different brains." The body of the work is but a poor travestie of the material and realistic portion of that of Cervantes. His Don Quixote is degraded from the character of a dreamer lost in the land far fairer than any of this world is allowed to know, into that of an undignified and helpless idiot, whom the author very properly conducts to the hospital of Toledo. Sancho becomes an utter blockhead, who confounds grossness with simplicity, and that which is vile with that which is natural; whose attempts at pleasantry sometimes excite compassion, but more frequently disgust. The whole work is but a faint, feeble shadow of the great original in a sickly sun, the original without which it had long ago been lost, and without which it would, of course, never have been composed.

It may be added, however, that Cervantes was not behind the *soi-disant* Avellaneda in abuse, and that the latter was to a certain extent justified of his child. Cervantes had concluded his work with the verse borrowed from the *Orlando*:—

Forse altri canterà con miglior plettro.

That other presented himself after a lapse of nine years, and Cervantes received him in high dudgeon. On many occasions he neglects the interest of his work to satisfy his spleen with diatribes against Avellaneda. For instance, in his conversation at the inn at Zaragoza, which Don Quixote did not take for a castle, between Don Gerónimo and Don Juan. "Why are you for reading these follies?" asks Don Gerónimo, *apropos* of the book of Avellaneda. "Whoever has read the first part of the *History of Don Quixote* cannot possibly have any pleasure in reading the second." "With all that," replies Don Juan, "it would be well to read it, for there is no book so bad as not to contain something good." Again, in his visit to the printing-house at Barcelona, Don Quixote sees this obnoxious volume, and wonders that it has not been burnt to cinders because of its impertinence, and ends with "mas á cada puerco llegará su

S. Martin." And when Altisidora recounts her experiences of the amusements of Hell, she mentions the devils playing at ball with books stuffed with wind and butter. One of these, new and well bound, received a kick that tore out its bowels. "What is that book?" said one devil of another; who answered, "The second part of the *History of Don Quixote de la Mancha*, composed by an Aragonese, who declares himself a native of Tordesillas." "Away with it," howls the first devil, "down to the abysses of hell, that my eyes may see it no more." "Is it so very bad, then?" asked the other. "So bad, that if I myself wished to make it worse, I should not succeed." Bad as it was, Cervantes more than once imitated it. Clemencin has noted two or three instances; there are others. The adventure of the *Cortes de la Muerte* was preceded by that of the group of comedians in Chapter xxvi. of Avellaneda. In Chapter xxvii. of the same book Don Quixote assists at a representation of a play of the celebrated Lope de Vega Carpio. Here a son, possessed by a devil, in order to obtain revenge for the queen, his mother's, refusal of a certain horse, accuses her of having, during the king's absence, committed adultery with one of his retinue. The woman who plays the part of the queen appears deeply affected by this false witness. Then Don Quixote, seeing that there were none on her side, rises in extreme wrath, crying "It is a villanous wickedness," &c., and rushes on the actors who bore false witness, as Cervantes makes him rush on the puppets of Maese Pedro. It may be said that the story of Avellaneda is more natural than that of Cervantes; it is, however, a question whether it is more entertaining. The sweet chord of literary revenge echoed to the last. "Item"—thus runs the last paragraph of the will of Alonso Quijano the Good, no more Don Quixote de la Mancha—"Item. I beseech the said gentlemen (the Curate and Bachelor Sanson Carrasco) my executors, that if haply they shall come to the knowledge of the author who they say composed a history which goes about with the title of *The Second Part of the Achievements of Don Quixote*, that they will on my part, as kindly as they are able, beg him to pardon me for having been the innocent occasion of his writing so many and monstrous absurdities as he has therein written, for I quit this life with some scruple of conscience arising from that consideration."

The so-called translation of Le Sage by no means gives an exact idea of the original, attributed to Avellaneda, and the only English translation that the writer is acquainted with, by Mr. Baker, published in 1745, with curious cuts, being advertised as "translated from the original Spanish," is, of course, a bad version of the French of Le Sage. His work is no more a translation of Avellaneda than his *Diable Boiteux* is a translation of *El diablo Cojuelo* of Guevara. To give an instance—Don Quixote, according to Le Sage, is shot through the head with a brace of bullets by an enraged trooper whom he meets about two hundred paces from Argamasilla, while in the original, after marching onward continually, like Ahasuerus, he finds his goal in the mad hospital of Toledo. It may be the author intended by this *dénoûment* to show that the rest of the

world was not mad. Fully armed, mounted on the much-enduring Rozinante, La Mancha's knight enters, and the door closes on the imitator of Amadis de Gaula and his grinning companions in distress.

The only other imitation of *Don Quixote* to which we can here allude is the *Spiritual Quixote* of Richard Graves, rector of Claverton. This representation of a summer's ramble of Mr. Geoffry Wildgoose, its hero, with a thick-set little crazy cobbler for his squire, Jeremiah Tugwell or Tagwell or Tackwell (for learning was at a low ebb in the family, and the orthography is somewhat dubious, and there were some who declared it should be Tugwool by synecdoche for Tug-mutton), was, at the time of its production about a century ago, extremely popular. It is a satire on Methodism and a certain Mr. Whitfield supposed to have invented it. When Wildgoose lamented the sad decay of Christian piety, Jeremiah sadly shook his head, and when his master asserted the preference of faith over works, "Yes, yes," cried Jerry, "faith's all; our good works are no better than 'filthy rags' in the sight of God." Jerry has a wife Dorothy, who "wears that emblem of sovereignty the breeches," and the two meet with adventures conceived in a style approaching, *longo intervallo*, that of Cervantes. The object of the work seems to have been to extinguish, if possible, those idle itinerant preachers who, having in view the pleasing of old women and the filling of their pockets, did then as now their ignorant best to bring what is called religion into contempt.

Even Sancho has found one to chronicle his farther adventures after the death of his liege—Jacinto Maria Delgado, who wrote a volume modestly entitled, *Adiciones á la historia del Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha;* but the composition only proves that Sancho Panza's ass was not a beast for everyone to ride.

The writer of an episode in the Mahabharata, that great epic of India, says that as waters in a tank may be used for drinking, washing, cooking, bathing, and many other purposes, so the texts of Scripture can be converted by priests in many ways to their own interests. This wresting of signification has obtained as well in all famous pictures as in all famous books, and *Don Quixote* is not without it. No matter how diverse the stories, from the Bible and Dante's Divine Comedy to the most lamentable tragedy mixed full of pleasant mirth of Dame Durden and her dog, allegories have been detected by the ingenious; therefore also *Don Quixote* has been supposed to be an allegory. Cervantes has been treated as Homer was treated by Democritus of Abdera, or Dante in modern days by Ozanam and King John of Saxony; but the Greek Minerva was born mature from the brain of Homer and the Italian from that of Dante, while the Spanish Minerva was already almost adult when Cervantes wrote. Compared to Lope and Calderon, Cervantes was but a lay gent.

There are who, not without many and learned arguments, have supposed Cervantes meant to represent the Emperor Charles V. by his hero; while John Bowle, who deserves so much and has received so little for his labours, thinks Ignacio Loyola might have been pitched upon. Loyola in youth was certainly much addicted to books of knight-errantry, and pass-

ing over that narrow and indeterminate border line between romance and religion, transferred his affections subsequently to the *Flos Sanctorum*, resolving to imitate what he there read. Like Don Quixote, this cavalier of Christ is said to have watched his new arms a whole night long, partly on foot, partly on his knees before the image of Our Lady of Monserrate. There are those who see in the carrier lover of Maritornes a townsman of Arévalo, because a townsman of Arévalo had once done Cervantes an ill turn. Cide Hamete Benengeli is called "autor arábigo y manchego," as a nipping taunt of the people of La Mancha for their mixed blood. The Licentiate Alonso Perez de Alcobendas is Blanco de Paz anagrammatized. Dulcinea is a lady of Tobosa named Ana Zarco de Morales. Don Quixote himself is a certain Quijada de Salazar, who had opposed Cervantes' marriage with Doña Catalina Palacios, and Sancho is discovered to be Fray Luis de Aliaga, probably on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, from there being no conceivable connection between them. Those who indulge in these fantasies are like that beetle which, carefully avoiding rose leaves, eeds on dung. They search for allusions, ridiculous or morally evil, but none, or very few, venture to find an original for such noble characters as the Caballero del Verde Gaban, "el primer santo á la gineta." None venture to say to whom Cervantes alludes in the figures of Cardenio, Luscinda, or Dorothea, and to what circumstance he owes that delicate and pure love of Don Luis and Doña Clara—a picture as fair as that of Paul and Virginia, or Romeo and Juliet, and which might detain on his mission from Paradise an angel, if angels are now sent, as the Merciful Majesty once sent Raphael to Tobit and the daughter of Raguel. The same madness which inspired Don Quixote in the braving of the warriors of those armies which turned out, after all, no other warriors than these have turned out, mere sheep, this madness seems to have inspired those subtle ones who have detected cavaliers of the court of Philip III. in Alifanfaron de la Trapobana, Brandabarbaran, Micocolembo, and Pentapolin of the tucked-up sleeve. An ingenious commentator, under this point of view, makes the hero the Duke de Lerma, principally relying on a supposed resemblance between the traits of the Cavalier of La Mancha and those of the minister of Philip III. It would be difficult to disprove this likeness at the present day, but those who have thought the conceit worthy of their confutation have reminded us that Cervantes received a pension from this Duke's friend, the Count de Lemos, and that he would scarcely dedicate the second portion of his work to him whose avowed friend had been ridiculed in the first. But there is some trifling point of resemblance, and this is enough. Those who delight in these subtleties are as easily satisfied as Dorothea, who, when Don Quixote was about to undress himself to afford her ocular evidence of his bearing the mole, the stamp of her deliverer, about the exact situation of which some doubt was entertained, said to extricate herself from this emergency, "Whether it be on the shoulder or the backbone or elsewhere is of little consequence. It is enough that you have a mole."

HE SAW A BATHER CARRIED ALONG IN THE CURRENT.

Far from the Madding Crowd.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Doubts Arise: Doubts Vanish.

BATHSHEBA underwent the enlargement of her husband's absence from hours to days with a slight feeling of surprise, and a slight feeling of relief; yet neither sensation rose at any time far above the level commonly designated as indifference. She belonged to him: the certainties of that position were so well defined, and the reasonable probabilities of its issue so bounded, that she could not speculate on contingencies. Taking no further interest in herself as a splendid woman, she acquired the indifferent feelings of an outsider in contemplating her probable fate as an interesting wretch; for Bathsheba drew herself and her future in colours that no reality could exceed for darkness. Her original vigorous pride of youth had sickened, and with it had declined all her anxieties about coming years, since anxiety recognises a better and a worse alternative, and Bathsheba had made up her mind that alternatives on any noteworthy scale had ceased for her. Soon, or later—and that not very late—her husband would be home again. And then the days of their tenancy of the Upper Farm would be numbered. There had originally been shown by the agent to the estate some distrust of Bathsheba's tenure as James Everdene's successor, on the score of her sex, and her youth, and her beauty; but the peculiar nature of her uncle's will, his own frequent testimony before his death to her cleverness in such a pursuit, and her vigorous marshalling of the numerous flocks and herds which came suddenly into her hands before negotiations were concluded, had won

confidence in her powers, and no further objections had been raised. She had latterly been in great doubt as to what the legal effects of her marriage would be upon her position; but no notice had been taken as yet of her change of name, and only one point was clear, that in the event of her own or of her husband's inability to meet the agent at the forthcoming January rent-day very little consideration would be shown, and, for that matter, very little would be deserved. Once out of the farm, the approach of poverty would be sure.

Hence Bathsheba lived in a perception that her purposes were broken off. She was not a woman who could hope on without good materials for the process, differing thus from the less farsighted and energetic, though more petted ones of the sex, with whom hope goes on as a sort of clock-work which the merest food and shelter are sufficient to wind up; and perceiving clearly that her mistake had been a fatal one, she accepted her position, and waited coldly for the end.

The first Saturday after Troy's departure she went to Casterbridge alone, a journey she had not before taken since her marriage. On this Saturday Bathsheba was passing slowly on foot through the crowd of rural business-men gathered as usual in front of the market-house, and as usual gazed upon by the burghers with feelings that those healthy lives were dearly paid for by the lack of possible aldermanship, when a man, who had apparently been following her, said some words to another on her left hand. Bathsheba's ears were keen as those of any wild animal, and she distinctly heard what the speaker said, though her back was towards him.

"I am looking for Mrs. Troy. Is that she there?"

"Yes; that's the young lady, I believe," said the person addressed.

"I have some awkward news to break to her. Her husband is drowned."

As if endowed with the spirit of prophecy, Bathsheba gasped out, "Oh, it is not true; it cannot be true!" Then she said and heard no more. The ice of self-command which had latterly gathered over her was broken, and the currents burst forth again, and overwhelmed her. A darkness came into her eyes, and she fell.

But not to the ground. A gloomy man, who had been observing her from under the portico of the old corn-exchange when she passed through the group without, stepped quickly to her side at the moment of her exclamation, and caught her in his arms as she sank down.

"What is it?" said Boldwood, looking up at the bringer of the big news as he supported her.

"Her husband was drowned this week while bathing in Carrow Cove. A coastguardsman found his clothes and brought them into Budmouth yesterday."

Thereupon a strange fire lighted up Boldwood's eye, and his face flushed with the suppressed excitement of an unutterable thought. Everybody's glance was now centred upon him and the unconscious Bathsheba. He lifted her bodily off the ground, and smoothed down the folds of her dress as a child might have taken a storm-beaten bird and

arranged its ruffled plumes, and bore her along the pavement to the Three Choughs Inn. Here he passed with her under the archway into a private room, and by the time he had deposited—so lothly—the precious burden upon a sofa, Bathsheba had opened her eyes, and remembering all that had occurred, murmured "I want to go home!"

Boldwood left the room. He stood for a moment in the passage to recover his senses. The experience had been too much for his consciousness to keep up with, and now that he had grasped it it had gone again. For those few heavenly golden moments she had been in his arms. What did it matter about her not knowing it? She had been close to his breast; he had been close to hers.

He started onward again, and sending a woman to her, went out to ascertain all the facts of the case. These appeared to be limited to what he had already heard. He then ordered her horse to be put into the gig, and when all was ready returned to inform her. He found that though still pale and unwell, she had in the meantime sent for the Budmouth man who brought the tidings, and learnt from him all there was to know.

Being hardly in a condition to drive home as she had driven to town, Boldwood, with every delicacy of manner and feeling, offered to get her a driver, or to give her a seat in his phaeton, which was more comfortable than her own conveyance. These proposals Bathsheba gently declined, and the farmer at once departed. About half an hour later she invigorated herself by an effort, and took her seat and the reins as usual—in external appearance much as if nothing had happened. She went out of the town by a tortuous back street, and drove slowly along, unconscious of the road and the scene. The first shades of evening were showing themselves when Bathsheba reached home, when, silently alighting and leaving the horse in the hands of the boy, she proceeded at once upstairs. Liddy met her on the landing. The news had preceded Bathsheba to Weatherbury by half an hour, and Liddy looked inquiringly into her mistress's face. Bathsheba had nothing to say.

She entered her bedroom and sat by the window, and thought and thought till night enveloped her, and the extreme lines only of her shape were visible. Somebody came to the door, knocked, and opened it.

"Well, what is it, Liddy?" she said.

"I was thinking there must be something got for you to wear," said Liddy, with hesitation.

"What do you mean?"

"Mourning."

"No, no, no," said Bathsheba, hurriedly.

"But I suppose there must be something done for poor——"

"Not at present, I think. It is not necessary."

"Why not, ma'am?"

"Because he's still alive."

"How do you know that?" said Liddy, amazed.

"I don't know it. But wouldn't it have been different, or shouldn't I have heard more, or wouldn't they have found him, Liddy?—or—I don't know how it is, but death would have been different from how this is. I am full of a feeling that he is still alive!"

Bathsheba remained firm in this opinion till Monday, when two circumstances conjoined to shake it. The first was a short paragraph in the local newspaper, which, beyond making by a methodizing pen formidable presumptive evidence of Troy's death by drowning, contained the important testimony of a young Mr. Barker, M.D., of Budmouth, who spoke to being an eye-witness of the accident, in a letter to the editor. In this he stated that he was passing over the cliff on the remoter side of the cove just as the sun was setting. At that time he saw a bather carried along in the current outside the mouth of the cove, and guessed in an instant that there was but a poor chance for him unless he should be possessed of unusual muscular powers. He drifted behind a projection of the coast, and Mr. Barker followed along the shore in the same direction. But by the time that he could reach an elevation sufficiently great to command a view of the sea beyond, dusk had set in, and nothing further was to be seen.

The other circumstance was the arrival of his clothes, when it became necessary for her to examine and identify them—though this had virtually been done long before by those who inspected the letters in his pockets. It was so evident to her in the midst of her agitation that Troy had undressed in the full conviction of dressing again almost immediately, that the notion that anything but death could have prevented him was never entertained.

Then Bathsheba said to herself that others were assured in their opinion, and why should not she be? A strange reflection occurred to her, causing her face to flush. Troy had left her, and followed Fanny into another world. Had he done this intentionally, yet contrived to make his death appear like an accident? Oddly enough, this thought of how the apparent might differ from the real—made vivid by her bygone jealousy of Fanny, and the remorse he had shown that night—blinded her to the perception of any other possible difference, less tragic, but to herself far more terrible.

When alone late that evening beside a small fire, and much calmed down, Bathsheba took Troy's watch into her hand, which had been restored to her with the rest of the articles belonging to him. She opened the case as he had opened it before her a week ago. There was the little coil of pale hair which had been as the fuze to this great explosion.

"He was hers and she was his, and they are gone together," she said. "I am nothing to either of them, and why should I keep her hair?" She took it in her hand, and held it over the fire. "No—I'll not burn it—I'll keep it in memory of her, poor thing!" she added, snatching back her hand.

CHAPTER XLIX.

OAK'S ADVANCEMENT: A GREAT HOPE.

THE later autumn and the winter drew on apace, and the leaves lay thick upon the turf of the glades and the mosses of the woods. Bathsheba, having previously been living in a state of suspended feeling which was not suspense, now lived in a mood of quietude which was not precisely peacefulness. While she had known him to be alive she could have thought of his death with equanimity; but now that she believed she had lost him, she regretted that he was not hers still. She kept the farm going, raked in her profits without caring keenly about them, and expended money on ventures because she had done so in bygone days, which, though not long gone by, seemed infinitely removed from her present. She looked back upon that past over a great gulf, as if she were now a dead person, having the faculty of meditation still left in her, by means of which, like the mouldering gentlefolk of the poet's story, she could sit and ponder what a gift life used to be.

However, one excellent result of her general apathy was the long-delayed installation of Oak as bailiff; but he having virtually exercised that function for a long time already, the change, beyond the substantial increase of wages it brought, was little more than a nominal one addressed to the outside world.

Boldwood lived secluded and inactive. Much of his wheat and all his barley of that season had been spoilt by the rain. It sprouted, grew into intricate mats, and was ultimately thrown to the pigs in armfuls. The strange neglect which had produced this ruin and waste became the subject of whispered talk among all the people round; and it was elicited from one of Boldwood's men that forgetfulness had nothing to do with it, for he had been reminded of the danger to his corn as many times and as persistently as inferiors dared to do. The sight of the pigs turning in disgust from the rotten ears seemed to arouse Boldwood, and he one evening sent for Oak. Whether it was suggested by Bathsheba's recent act of promotion or not, the farmer proposed at the interview that Gabriel should undertake the superintendence of the Lower Farm as well as of Bathsheba's, because of the necessity Boldwood felt for such aid, and the impossibility of discovering a more trustworthy man. Gabriel's malignant star was assuredly setting fast.

Bathsheba, when she learnt of this proposal—for Oak was obliged to consult her—at first languidly objected. She considered that the two farms together were too extensive for the observation of one man. Boldwood, who was apparently determined by personal rather than commercial reasons, suggested that Oak should be furnished with a horse for his sole use, when the plan would present no difficulty, the two farms lying side by side. Boldwood did not directly communicate with her during these negotiations, only speaking to Oak, who was the go-between throughout.

All was harmoniously arranged at last, and we now see Oak mounted on a strong cob, and daily trotting the length and breadth of about two thousand acres in a cheerful spirit of surveillance, as if the crops all belonged to him,—the actual mistress of the one half, and the master of the other, sitting in their respective homes in gloomy and sad seclusion.

Out of this there arose during the spring succeeding, a talk in the parish that Gabriel Oak was feathering his nest fast. "Whatever d'ye think," said Susan Tall, "Gable Oak is coming it quite the dand. He now wears shining boots with hardly a hob in 'em, two or three times a-week, and a tall hat a-Sundays, and 'a hardly knows the name of smockfrock. When I see people strut enough to be cut up into bantam cocks, I stand dormant with wonder, and says no more."

It was eventually known that Gabriel, though paid a fixed wage by Bathsheba independent of the fluctuations of agricultural profits, had made an engagement with Boldwood by which Oak was to receive a share of the receipts—a small share certainly, yet it was money of a higher quality than mere wages, and capable of expansion in a way that wages were not. Some were beginning to consider Oak a near man, for though his condition had thus far improved, he lived in no better style than before, occupying the same cottage, paring his own potatoes, mending his stockings, and sometimes even making his bed with his own hands. But as Oak was not only provokingly indifferent to public opinion, but a man who clung persistently to old habits and usages, simply because they were old, there was room for doubt as to his motives.

A great hope had latterly germinated in Boldwood, whose unreasoning devotion to Bathsheba could only be characterized as a fond madness which neither time nor circumstance, evil nor good report, could weaken or destroy. This fevered hope had grown up again like a grain of mustard-seed during the quiet which followed the universal belief that Troy was drowned. He nourished it fearfully, and almost shunned the contemplation of it in earnest, lest facts should reveal the wildness of the dream. Bathsheba having at last been persuaded to wear mourning, her appearance as she entered the church in that guise was in itself a weekly addition to his faith that a time was coming—very far off perhaps, yet surely nearing—when his waiting on events should have its reward. How long he might have to wait he had not yet closely considered. What he would try to recognise was, that the severe schooling she had been subjected to had made Bathsheba much more considerate than she had formerly been of the feelings of others, and he trusted that, should she be willing at any time in the future to marry any man at all, that man would be himself. There was a substratum of good feeling in her: her self-reproach for the injury she had thoughtlessly done him might be depended upon now to a much greater extent than before her infatuation and disappointment. It would be possible to approach her by the channel of her good-nature, and to suggest a friendly business-like compact between them for fulfilment at some future day, keeping the passionate side of his desire entirely out of her sight. Such was Boldwood's hope.

To the eyes of the middle-aged, Bathsheba was perhaps additionally charming just now. Her exuberance of spirit was pruned down; the original phantom of delight had shown herself to be not too bright for human nature's daily food, and she had been able to enter this second poetical phase without losing much of the first in the process.

Bathsheba's return from a two month's visit to her old aunt at Norcombe afforded the impassioned and yearning farmer a pretext for inquiring directly after her—now presumably in the ninth month of her widowhood—and endeavouring to get a notion of her state of mind regarding him. This occurred in the middle of the haymaking, and Boldwood contrived to be near Liddy, who was assisting in the fields.

"I am glad to see you out of doors, Lydia," he said, pleasantly.

She simpered, and wondered in her heart why he should speak so frankly to her.

"I hope Mrs. Troy is quite well after her long absence," he continued, in a manner expressing that the coldest-hearted neighbour could scarcely say less about her.

"She is quite well, sir."

"And cheerful, I suppose?"

"Yes, cheerful."

"Fearful, did you say?"

"O no. I merely said she was cheerful."

"Tells you all her affairs?"

"No, sir."

"Some of them?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mrs. Troy puts much confidence in you, Lydia; and very wisely perhaps."

"She do, sir. I've been with her all through her troubles, and was with her at the time of Mr. Troy's death and all. And if she were to marry again I expect I should bide with her."

"She promises that you shall—quite natural," said the strategic lover, throbbing throughout him at the presumption which Liddy's words appeared to warrant—that his darling had thought of re-marriage.

"No—she doesn't promise it exactly. I merely judge on my own account."

"Yes, yes, I understand. When she alludes to the possibility of marrying again, you conclude——"

"She never do allude to it, sir," said Liddy, thinking how very stupid Mr. Boldwood was getting.

"Of course not," he returned hastily, his hope falling again. "You needn't take quite such long reaches with your rake, Lydia—short and quick ones are best. Well, perhaps, as she is absolute mistress again now, it is wise of her to resolve never to give up her freedom."

"My mistress did certainly once say, though not seriously, that she supposed she might marry again at the end of seven years from last year, if she wished."

"Ah, six years from the present time. Said that she might. She might marry at once in every reasonable person's opinion, whatever the lawyers may say to the contrary."

"Have you been to ask them?" said Liddy, innocently.

"Not I!" said Boldwood, growing red. "Liddy, you needn't stay here a minute later than you wish, so Mr. Oak says. I am now going on a little further. Good afternoon."

He went away vexed with himself and ashamed of having for this one time in his life done anything which could be called underhand. Poor Boldwood had no more skill in finesse than a battering-ram, and he was uneasy with a sense of having made himself to appear stupid and, what was worse, mean. But he had, after all, lighted upon one fact by way of repayment. It was a singularly fresh and fascinating fact, and though not without its sadness it was pertinent and real. In little more than six years from this time Bathsheba might certainly marry him. There was something definite in that hope, for admitting that there might have been no deep thought in her words to Liddy about marriage, they showed at least her creed on the matter.

This pleasant notion was now continually in his mind. Six years were a long time, but how much shorter than never, the idea he had for so long been obliged to endure! Jacob had served twice seven years for Rachel: what were six for such a woman as this? He tried to like the notion of waiting for her better than that of winning her at once. Boldwood felt his love to be so deep and strong and eternal, that it was possible she had never yet known its full volume, and this patience in delay would afford him an opportunity of giving sweet proof on the point. He would annihilate the six years of his life as if they were minutes—so little did he value his time on earth beside her love. He would let her see, all those six years of intangible ethereal courtship, how little care he had for anything but as it bore upon the consummation.

Meanwhile the early and the late summer brought round the week in which Greenhill Fair was held. This fair was frequently attended by the folk of Weatherbury.

CHAPTER L.

THE SHEEP FAIR: TROY TOUCHES HIS WIFE'S HAND.

GREENHILL was the Nijnii Novgorod of Wessex; and the busiest, merriest, noisiest day of the whole statute number was the day of the sheep-fair. This yearly gathering was upon the summit of a hill which retained in good preservation the remains of an ancient earthwork, consisting of a huge rampart and entrenchment of an oval form encircling the top of the hill, though somewhat broken down here and there. To each of the two chief openings on opposite sides a winding road ascended, and the level green space of twenty or thirty acres enclosed by the bank was the site of the fair. A few permanent erections dotted the spot, but

the majority of visitors patronised canvas alone for resting and feeding under during the time of their sojourn here.

Shepherds who attended with their flocks from long distances started from home two or three days, or even a week, before the fair, driving their charges a few miles each day—not more than ten or twelve—and resting them at night in hired fields by the wayside at previously chosen points, where they fed, having fasted since morning. The shepherd of each flock marched behind, a bundle containing his kit for the week strapped upon his shoulders, and in his hand his crook, which he used as the staff of his pilgrimage. Several of the sheep would get worn and lame, and occasionally a lambing occurred on the road. To meet these contingencies, there was frequently provided, to accompany the flocks from the remoter points, a pony and waggon into which the weakly ones were taken for the remainder of the journey.

The Weatherbury Farms, however, were no such long distance from the hill, and those arrangements were not necessary in their case. But the large united flocks of Bathsheba and Farmer Boldwood formed a valuable and imposing multitude which demanded much attention, and on this account Gabriel, in addition to Boldwood's shepherd and Cain Ball, accompanied them along the way—old George the dog of course behind them.

When the autumn sun slanted over Greenhill this morning and lighted the dewy flat upon its crest, nebulous clouds of dust were to be seen floating between the pairs of hedges which streaked the wide prospects around in all directions. These gradually converged upon the base of the hill, and the flocks became individually visible, climbing the serpentine ways which led to the top. Thus, in a slow procession, they entered the openings to which the roads wended, multitude after multitude, horned and hornless—blue flocks and red flocks, buff flocks and brown flocks, even green and salmon-tinted flocks, according to the fancy of the colourist and custom of the farm. Men were shouting, dogs were barking, with greatest animation, but the thronging travellers in so long a journey had grown nearly indifferent to such terrors, though they still bleated piteously at the unwontedness of their experiences, a tall shepherd rising here and there in the midst of them, like a gigantic idol amid a crowd of prostrate devotees.

The great mass of sheep in the fair consisted of South Downs and the old Wessex horned breeds; to the latter class Bathsheba's and Farmer Boldwood's mainly belonged. These filed in about nine o'clock, their vermiculated horns lopping gracefully on each side of their cheeks in geometrically perfect spirals, a small pink and white ear nestling under each horn. Before and behind came other varieties, perfect leopards as to the full rich substance of their coats, and only lacking the spots. There were also a few of the Oxfordshire breed, whose wool was beginning to curl like a child's flaxen hair, though surpassed in this respect by the effeminate Leicesters, which were in turn less curly than the Cotswolds. But

the most picturesque by far was a small flock of Exmoors, which chanced to be there this year. Their pied faces and legs, dark and heavy horns, tresses of wool hanging round their swarthy foreheads, quite relieved the monotony of the flocks in that quarter. All these bleating, panting, and weary thousands had entered and were penned before the morning had far advanced, the dog belonging to each flock being tied to the corner of the pen containing it. Alleys for pedestrians intersected the pens, which soon became crowded with buyers and sellers from far and near.

In another part of the hill an altogether different scene began to force itself upon the eye towards midday. A circular tent, of exceptional newness and size, was in course of erection here. As the day drew on, the flocks began to change hands, lightening the shepherds' responsibilities; and they turned their attention to this tent, and inquired of a man at work there, whose soul seemed concentrated on tying a bothering knot in no time, what was going on.

"The Royal Hippodrome Performance of Turpin's Ride to York and the Death of Black Bess," replied the man promptly, without turning his eyes or leaving off tying.

As soon as the tent was completed, the band struck up highly stimulating harmonies, and the announcement was publicly made, Black Bess standing in a conspicuous position on the outside, as a living proof, if proof were wanted, of the truth of the oracular utterances from the stage over which the people were to enter. These were so convinced by such genuine appeals to heart and understanding both that they soon began to crowd in abundantly, among the foremost being visible Jan Coggan and Joseph Poorgrass, who were holiday keeping here to-day.

"That's the great ruffin pushing me!" screamed a woman, in front of Jan, over her shoulder to him when the rush was at its fiercest.

"How can I help pushing ye when the folk behind push me?" said Coggan, in a deprecating tone, turning his head towards the aforesaid folk as far as he could without turning his body, which was jammed as in a vice.

There was a silence; then the drums and trumpets again sent forth their echoing notes. The crowd was again ecstasied, and gave another lurch in which Coggan and Poorgrass were again thrust by those behind upon the women in front.

"O that helpless feymels should be at the mercy of such ruffins!" exclaimed one of these ladies again, as she swayed like a reed shaken by the wind.

"Now," said Coggan, appealing in an earnest voice to the public at large as it stood clustered about his shoulder-blades, "did ye ever hear such a unreasonable woman as that? Upon my carcase, neighbours, if I could only get out of this cheesewring, the d—— women might eat the show for me!"

"Don't ye lose yer temper, Jan!" implored Joseph Poorgrass, in a whisper. "They might get their men to murder us, for I think by the shine of their eyes that they are a sinful form of womankind."

Jan held his tongue, as if he had no objection to be pacified to please

a friend, and they gradually reached the foot of the ladder, Poorgrass being flattened like a jumping-jack, and the sixpence, for admission, which he had got ready half an hour earlier, having become so reeking hot in the tight squeeze of his excited hand that the woman in spangles, brazen rings set with glass diamonds, and with chalked face and shoulders, who took the money of him, hastily dropped it again from a fear that some trick had been played to burn her fingers. So they all entered, and the sides of the tent, to the eyes of an observer on the outside, became bulged into innumerable pimples such as we observe on a sack of potatoes, caused by the various human heads, backs, and elbows at high-pressure within.

At the rear of the large tent there were two small dressing-tents. One of these, allotted to the male performers, was partitioned into halves by a cloth; and in one of the divisions there was sitting on the grass, pulling on a pair of jack-boots, a young man whom we instantly recognise as Sergeant Troy.

Troy's appearance in this position may be briefly accounted for. The brig aboard which he was taken in Budmouth Roads was about to start on a voyage, though somewhat short of hands. Troy read the articles and joined, and, before they sailed, a boat was despatched across the bay to Carrow Cove; but, as he had half expected, his clothes were gone. He ultimately worked his passage to the United States, where he made a precarious living in various towns as Professor of Gymnastics, Sword Exercise, Fencing, and Pugilism. A few months were sufficient to give him a distaste for this kind of life. There was a certain animal form of refinement in his nature; and however pleasant a strange condition might be whilst privations were easily warded off, it was disadvantageously coarse when money was short. There was ever present, too, the idea that he could claim a home and its comforts did he but choose to return to England and Weatherbury Farm. Whether Bathsheba thought him dead was a frequent subject of curious conjecture. To England he did return at last; but the fact of drawing nearer to Weatherbury abstracted its fascinations, and his intention to enter his old groove at that place became modified. It was with gloom he considered on landing at Liverpool that if he were to go home his reception would be of a kind very unpleasant to contemplate; for what Troy had in the way of emotion was an occasional fitful sentiment which sometimes caused him as much inconvenience as emotion of a strong and healthy kind. Bathsheba was not a woman to be made a fool of, or a woman to suffer in silence; and how could he endure existence with a spirited wife to whom at first entering he would be beholden for food and lodging? Moreover, it was not at all unlikely that his wife would fail at her farming, if she had not already done so; and he would then become liable for her maintenance: and what a life and future of poverty with her would be, the spectre of Fanny constantly between them, harrowing his temper and embittering her words! Thus, for reasons touching on distaste, regret, and shame commingled, he put off his return from day to day, and would have decided to

put it off altogether if he could have found anywhere else the ready-made establishment which existed for him there.

At this time—the July preceding the September in which we find him at Greenhill Fair—he fell in with a travelling circus which was performing in the outskirts of a northern town. Troy introduced himself to the manager by taming a restive horse of the troupe, hitting a suspended apple with a pistol-bullet fired from the animal's back when in full gallop, and other feats. For his merits in these—all more or less based upon his experiences as a dragoon-guardsman—Troy was taken into the company, and the play of Turpin was prepared with a view to his personation of the chief character. Troy was not greatly elated by the appreciative spirit in which he was undoubtedly treated, but he thought the engagement might afford him a few weeks for consideration. It was thus carelessly, and without having formed any definite plan for the future, that Troy found himself at Greenhill Fair with the rest of the company on this day.

And now the mild autumn sun got lower, and in front of the pavilion the following incident had taken place. Bathsheba—who was driven to the fair that day by her odd man Poorgrass—had, like every one else, read or heard the announcement that Mr. Francis, the Great Cosmopolite Equestrian and Roughrider, would enact the part of Turpin, and she was not yet too old and careworn to be without a little curiosity to see him. This particular show was by far the largest and grandest in the fair, a horde of little shows grouping themselves under its shade like chickens around a hen. The crowd had passed in, and Boldwood, who had been watching all the day for an opportunity of speaking to her, seeing her comparatively isolated, came up to her side.

"I hope the sheep have done well to-day, Mrs. Troy?" he said nervously.

"O yes, thank you," said Bathsheba, colour springing up in the centre of her cheeks. "I was fortunate enough to sell them all before we got upon the hill, so we hadn't to pen at all."

"And now you are entirely at leisure?"

"Yes, except that I have to see one more dealer in two hours time: otherwise I should be going home. I was looking at this large tent and the announcement. Have you ever seen the play of 'Turpin's Ride to York?' Turpin was a real man, was he not?"

"O yes, perfectly true—all of it. Indeed, I think I've heard Jan Coggan say that a relation of his knew Tom King, Turpin's friend, quite well."

"Coggan is rather given to strange stories connected with his relations, we must remember. I hope they can all be believed."

"Yes, yes; we know Coggan. But Turpin is true enough. You have never seen it played, I suppose?"

"Never. I was not allowed to go into these places when I was young. Hark! what's that prancing? How they shout!"

"Black Bess just starting off, I suppose. Am I right in supposing you would like to see the performance, Mrs. Troy? Please excuse my mistake, if it is one; but if you would like to, I'll get a seat for you with pleasure." Perceiving that she hesitated, he added, "I myself shall not stay to see it: I've seen it before."

Now Bathsheba did care a little to see the show, and had only withheld her feet from the ladder because she feared to go in alone. She had been hoping that Oak might appear, whose assistance in such cases was always accepted as an inalienable right, but Oak was nowhere to be seen; and hence it was that she said, "Then if you will just look in first, to see if there's room, I think I will go in for a minute or two."

And so a short time after this Bathsheba appeared in the tent with Boldwood at her elbow, who, taking her to a "reserved" seat, again withdrew.

This feature consisted of one raised bench in a very conspicuous part of the circle, covered with red cloth, and floored with a piece of carpet, and Bathsheba immediately found, to her confusion, that she was the single reserved individual in the tent, the rest of the crowded spectators one and all standing on their legs on the borders of the arena, where they got twice as good a view of the performance for half the money. Hence as many eyes were turned upon her, enthroned alone in this place of honour, against a scarlet background, as upon the ponies and clown who were engaged in preliminary exploits in the centre, Turpin not having yet appeared. Once there, Bathsheba was forced to make the best of it and remain: she sat down, spreading her skirts with some dignity over the unoccupied space on each side of her, and giving a new and feminine aspect to the pavilion. In a few minutes she noticed the fat red nape of Coggan's neck among those standing just below her, and Joseph Poorgrass's saintly profile a little further on.

The interior was shadowy with a peculiar shade. The strange luminous semi-opacities of fine autumn afternoons and eves intensified into Rembrandt effects the few yellow sunbeams which came through holes and divisions in the canvas, and spirted like jets of gold-dust across the dusky blue atmosphere of haze pervading the tent, until they alighted on inner surfaces of cloth opposite, and shone like little lamps suspended there.

Troy, on peeping from his dressing-tent through a slit for a reconnoitre before entering, saw his unconscious wife on high before him as described, sitting as queen of the tournament. He started back in utter confusion, for although his disguise effectually concealed his personality, he instantly felt that she would be sure to recognise his voice. He had several times during the day thought of the possibility of some Weatherbury person or other appearing and recognising him; but he had taken the risk carelessly. If they see me, let them, he had said. But here was Bathsheba in her own person; and the reality of the scene was so much intenser than any of his prefigurings that he felt he had not half enough considered the point. She looked so charming and fair that his

cool mood about Weatherbury people was changed. He had not expected her to exercise this power over him in the twinkling of an eye. Should he go on, and care nothing? He could not bring himself to do that. Beyond a politic wish to remain unknown, there suddenly arose in him now a sense of shame at the possibility that his attractive young wife, who already despised him, should despise him more by discovering him in so mean a condition after so long a time. He actually blushed at the thought, and was vexed beyond measure that his sentiments of dislike towards Weatherbury should have led him to dally about the country in this way. But Troy was never more clever than when absolutely at his wit's end. He hastily thrust aside the curtain dividing his own little dressing-space from that of the manager and proprietor, who now appeared as the individual called Tom King as far down as his waist, and the aforesaid respectable manager thence to his toes.

"Here 's the d—— to pay!" said Troy.

"How 's that?"

"Why, there 's a good-for-nothing scamp in the tent I don't want to see, who'll discover me and nab me as sure as Satan if I open my mouth. What 's to be done?"

"You must appear now, I think."

"I can't."

"But the play must proceed."

"Do you give out that Turpin has got a bad cold, and can't speak his part, but that he 'll perform it just the same without speaking."

The proprietor shook his head.

"Anyhow, play or no play, I won't open my mouth," said Troy, firmly.

"Very well, then let me see. I tell you how we 'll manage," said the other, who perhaps felt it would be extremely awkward to offend his leading man just at this time. "I won't tell them anything about your keeping silence; go on with the piece and say nothing, doing what you can by a judicious wink now and then, and a few indomitable nods in the heroic places, you know. They 'll never find out that the speeches are omitted."

This seemed feasible enough, for Turpin's speeches were not many or long, the fascination of the piece lying entirely in the action; and accordingly the play began, and at the appointed time Black Bess leapt into the grassy circle amid the plaudits of the spectators. At the turnpike scene, where Bess and Turpin are hotly pursued at midnight by the officers, and the half-awake gate-keeper in his tasselled nightcap denies that any horseman has passed, Coggan uttered a broad-chested, "Well done!" which could be heard all over the fair above the bleating, and Poorgrass smiled delightedly with a nice sense of dramatic contrast between our hero, who coolly leaps the gate, and halting justice in the form of his enemies, who must needs pull up cumbersomely and wait to be let through. At the death of Tom King, he could not refrain from seizing

Coggan by the hand, and whispering, with tears in his eyes, "Of course he's not really shot, Jan—only seemingly!" And when the last sad scene came on, and the body of the gallant and faithful Bess had to be carried out on a shutter by twelve volunteers from among the spectators, nothing could restrain Poorgrass from lending a hand, exclaiming, as he asked Jan to join him, "'Twill be something to tell of at Warren's in future years, Jan, and hand down to our children." For many a year in Weatherbury Joseph told, with the air of a man who had had experiences in his time, that he touched with his own hand the hoof of Bess as she lay upon the board upon his shoulder. If, as some thinkers hold, immortality consists in being enshrined in others' memories, then did Black Bess become immortal that day if she never had done so before.

Meanwhile Troy had added a few touches to his ordinary make-up for the character, the more effectually to disguise himself, and though he had felt faint qualms on first entering, the metamorphosis effected by judiciously "lining" his face with a wire rendered him safe from the eyes of Bathsheba and her men. Nevertheless, he was relieved when it was got through. There was a second performance in the evening, and the tent was lighted up. Troy had taken his part very quietly this time, venturing to introduce a few speeches on occasion; and was just concluding it when, whilst standing at the edge of the circle contiguous to the first row of spectators, he observed within a yard of him the eye of a man darted keenly into his side features. Troy hastily shifted his position, after having recognised in the scrutineer the knavish bailiff Pennyways, his wife's sworn enemy, who still hung about the outskirts of Weatherbury,

At first Troy resolved to take no notice and abide by circumstances. That he had been recognised by this man was highly probable; yet there was room for a doubt. Then the great objection he had felt to allowing news of his proximity to precede him to Weatherbury in the event of his return, based on a feeling that knowledge of his present occupation would discrédit him still further in his wife's eyes, returned in full force. Moreover, should he resolve not to return at all, a tale of his being alive and being in the neighbourhood would be awkward; and he was anxious to acquire a knowledge of his wife's temporal affairs before deciding which to do.

In this dilemma Troy at once went out to reconnoitre. It occurred to him that to find Pennyways, and make a friend of him if possible, would be a very wise act. He had put on a thick beard borrowed from the establishment, and in this he wandered about the fair-field. It was now almost dark, and respectable people were getting their carts and gigs ready to go home.

The largest refreshment-booth in the fair was provided by an innkeeper from a neighbouring town. This was considered an unexceptionable place for obtaining the necessary food and rest: Host Trencher (as he was wittily called by the local newspaper) being a substantial man of

high repute for catering through all the country round. The tent was divided into first and second-class compartments, and at the end of the first-class division was a yet further enclosure for the most exclusive, fenced off from the body of the tent by a luncheon-bar, behind which the host himself stood, bustling about in white apron and shirt sleeves, and looking as if he had never lived anywhere but under canvas all his life. In these penetralia were chairs and a table, which, on candles being lighted, made quite a cozy and luxurious show, with an urn, silver tea and coffee pots, china teacups, and plum cakes.

Troy stood at the entrance to the booth, where a gipsy-woman was frying pancakes over a little fire of sticks and selling them at a penny a piece, and looked over the heads of the people within. He could see nothing of Pennyways, but he soon discerned Bathsheba through an opening into the reserved space at the further end. Troy thereupon retreated, went round the tent into the darkness, and listened. He could hear Bathsheba's voice immediately inside the canvas; she was conversing with a man. A warmth overspread his face: surely she was not so unprincipled as to flirt in a fair! He wondered if, then, she reckoned upon his death as an absolute certainty. To get at the root of the matter, Troy took a penknife from his pocket and softly made two little cuts crosswise in the cloth, which, by folding back the corners, left a hole the size of a wafer. Close to this he placed his face, withdrawing it again in a movement of surprise; for his eye had been within twelve inches of the top of Bathsheba's head. It was too near to be convenient. He made another hole a little to one side and lower down, in a shaded place beside her chair, from which it was easy and safe to survey her by looking horizontally.

Troy took in the scene completely now. She was leaning back, sipping a cup of tea that she held in her hand, and the owner of the male voice was Boldwood, who had apparently just brought the cup to her. Bathsheba, being in a negligent mood, leant so idly against the canvas that it was pressed to the shape of her shoulder, and she was, in fact, as good as in Troy's arms; and he was obliged to keep his breast carefully backward that she might not feel its warmth through the cloth as he gazed in.

Troy found unexpected chords of feeling to be stirred again within him as they had been stirred earlier in the day. She was handsome as ever, and she was his. It was some minutes before he could counteract his sudden wish to go in, and claim her. Then he thought how the proud girl who had always looked down upon him even whilst it was to love him, would hate him on discovering him to be a strolling player. Were he to make himself known, that chapter of his life must at all risks be kept for ever from her and from the Weatherbury people, or his name would be a byword throughout the parish. He would be nicknamed "Turpin" as long as he lived. Assuredly before he could claim her these few past months of his existence must be entirely blotted out.

"Shall I get you another cup before you start, ma'am?" said Farmer Boldwood.

"Thank you," said Bathsheba. "But I must be going at once. It was great neglect in that man to keep me waiting here till so late. I should have gone two hours ago, if it had not been for him. I had no idea of coming in here; but there's nothing so refreshing as a cup of tea, though I should never have got one if you hadn't helped me."

Troy scrutinised her cheek as lit by the candles, and watched each varying shade thereon, and the white shell-like sinuosities of her little ear. She took out her purse and was insisting to Boldwood on paying for her tea for herself, when at this moment Pennyways entered the tent. Troy trembled: here was his scheme for respectability endangered at once. He was about to leave his hole of espial, attempt to follow Pennyways, and find out if the ex-bailiff had recognised him, when he was arrested by the conversation, and found he was too late.

"Excuse me, ma'am," said Pennyways; "I've some private information for your ear alone."

"I cannot hear it now," she said, coldly. That Bathsheba could not endure this man was evident; in fact, he was continually coming to her with some tale or other, by which he might creep into favour at the expense of persons maligned.

"I'll write it down," said Pennyways, confidently. He stooped over the table, pulled a leaf from a warped pocket-book, and wrote upon the paper, in a round hand—

"*Your husband is here. I've seen him. Who's the fool now?*"

This he folded small, and handed towards her. Bathsheba would not read it; she would not even put out her hand to take it. Pennyways, then, with a laugh of derision, tossed it into her lap, and, turning away, left her.

From the words and action of Pennyways, Troy, though he had not been able to see what the bailiff wrote, had not a moment's doubt that the note referred to him. Nothing that he could think of could be done to check the exposure. "Curse my luck!" he whispered, and added imprecations which rustled in the gloom like a pestilent wind. Meanwhile Boldwood said, taking up the note from her lap—

"Don't you wish to read it, Mrs. Troy? If not, I'll destroy it."

"Oh, well," said Bathsheba, carelessly, "perhaps it is unjust not to read it; but I can guess what it is about. He wants me to recommend him, or it is to tell me of some little scandal or another connected with my workpeople. He's always doing that."

Bathsheba held the note in her right hand. Boldwood handed towards her a plate of cut bread-and-butter; when, in order to take a slice, she put the note into her left hand, where she was still holding the purse, and then allowed her hand to drop beside her close to the canvas. The moment had come for saving his game, and Troy impulsively felt that he would play the card. For yet another time he looked at the fair hand,

and saw the pink finger-tips, and the blue veins of the wrist, encircled by a bracelet of coral chippings which she wore: how familiar it all was to him! Then, with the lightning action in which he was such an adept, he noiselessly slipped his hand under the bottom of the tent-cloth, which was far from being pinned tightly down, lifted it a little way, keeping his eye to the hole, snatched the note from her fingers, dropped the canvas, and ran away in the gloom towards the bank and ditch, smiling at the scream of astonishment which burst from her. Troy then slid down on the outside of the rampart, hastened round in the bottom of the entrenchment to a distance of a hundred yards, ascended again, and crossed boldly in a slow walk towards the front entrance of the tent. His object was now to get to Pennyways, and prevent a repetition of the announcement until such time as he should choose.

Troy reached the tent door, and standing among the groups there gathered, looked anxiously for Pennyways, evidently not wishing to make himself prominent by inquiring for him. One or two men were speaking of a daring attempt that had just been made to rob a young lady by lifting the canvas of the tent beside her. It was supposed that the rogue had imagined a slip of paper which she held in her hand to be a bank-note, for he had seized it, and made off with it, leaving her purse behind. His chagrin and disappointment at discovering its worthlessness would be a good joke, it was said. However, the occurrence seemed to have become known to few, for it had not interrupted a fiddler, who had lately begun playing by the door of the tent, nor the four bowed old men with grim countenances and walking-sticks in hand, who were dancing "Major Malley's Reel" to the tune. Behind these stood Pennyways. Troy glided up to him, beckoned, and whispered a few words; and with a mutual glance of concurrence the two men went into the night together.

CHAPTER LI.

Bathsheba Talks with Her Outrider.

The arrangement for getting back again to Weatherbury had been that Oak should take the place of Poorgrass in Bathsheba's conveyance and drive her home, it being discovered late in the afternoon that Joseph was suffering from his old complaint, a multiplying eye, and was, therefore, hardly trustworthy as coachman and protector to a lady. But Oak had found himself so occupied, and was full of so many cares relative to those portions of Boldwood's flocks that were not disposed of, that Bathsheba, without telling Oak or anybody, resolved to drive home herself, as she had many times done from Casterbridge Market, and trust to her good angel for performing the journey unmolested. But having fallen in with Farmer Boldwood accidentally (on her part at least) at the refreshment-tent, she found it impossible to refuse his offer to ride on horseback

beside her as escort. It had grown twilight before she was aware, but Boldwood assured her that there was no cause for uneasiness, as the moon would be up in half-an-hour.

Immediately after the incident in the tent, she had risen to go—now absolutely alarmed and really grateful for her old lover's protection—though regretting Gabriel's absence, whose company she would have much preferred, as being more proper as well as more pleasant, since he was her own managing-man and servant. This, however, could not be helped; she would not, on any consideration, treat Boldwood harshly, having once already ill-used him, and the moon having risen, and the gig being ready, she drove across the hill top in the wending ways which led downwards—to oblivious obscurity, as it seemed, for the moon and the hill it flooded with light were in appearance on a level, the rest of the world lying as a vast shady concave between them. Boldwood mounted his horse, and followed in close attendance behind. Thus they descended into the lowlands, and the sounds of those left on the hill came like voices from the sky, and the lights were as those of a camp in heaven. They soon passed the merry stragglers in the immediate vicinity of the hill, and got upon the high road.

The keen instincts of Bathsheba had perceived that the farmer's staunch devotion to herself was still undiminished, and she sympathised deeply. The sight had quite depressed her this evening; had reminded her of her folly; she wished anew, as she had wished many months ago, for some means of making reparation for her fault. Hence her pity for the man who so persistently loved on to his own injury and permanent gloom had betrayed Bathsheba into an injudicious considerateness of manner, which appeared almost like tenderness, and gave new vigour to the exquisite dream of a Jacob's seven years' service in poor Boldwood's mind.

He soon found an excuse for advancing from his position in the rear, and rode close by her side. They had gone two or three miles in the moonlight, speaking desultorily across the wheel of her gig concerning the fair, farming, Oak's usefulness to them both, and other indifferent subjects, when Boldwood said suddenly and simply—

"Mrs. Troy, you will marry again some day?"

This point-blank query unmistakably confused her, and it was not till a minute or more had elapsed that she said, "I have not seriously thought of any such subject."

"I quite understand that. Yet your late husband has been dead nearly one year, and——"

"You forget that his death was never absolutely proved, and so I suppose I am not legally a widow," she said, catching at the straw of escape that the fact afforded.

"Not absolutely proved, perhaps, but it was proved circumstantially. A man saw him drowning, too. No reasonable person has any doubt of his death; nor have you, ma'am, I should imagine."

"I have none now, or I should have acted differently," she said, gently. "I certainly, at first, had a strange unaccountable feeling that he could not have perished, but I have been able to explain that in several ways since. But though I am fully persuaded that I shall see him no more, I am far from thinking of marriage with another. I should be very contemptible to indulge in such a thought."

They were silent now awhile, and having struck into an unfrequented track across a common, the creaks of Boldwood's saddle and her gig springs were all the sounds to be heard. Boldwood ended the pause.

"Do you remember when I carried you fainting in my arms into the Three Choughs, in Casterbridge? Every dog has his day: that was mine."

"I know—I know it all," she said, hurriedly.

"I, for one, shall never cease regretting that events so fell out as to deny you to me."

"I, too, am very sorry," she said, and then checked herself. "I mean, you know, I am sorry you thought I——"

"I have always this dreary pleasure in thinking over those past times with you—that I was something to you before *he* was anything, and that you belonged *almost* to me. But, of course, that's nothing. You never liked me."

"I did; and respected you, too."

"Do you now?"

"Yes."

"Which?"

"How do you mean which?"

"Do you like me, or do you respect me?"

"I don't know—at least, I cannot tell you. It is difficult for a woman to define her feelings in language which is chiefly made by men to express theirs. My treatment of you was thoughtless, inexcusable, wicked. I shall eternally regret it. If there had been anything I could have done to make amends I would most gladly have done it—there was nothing on earth I so longed to do as to repair the error. But that was not possible."

"Don't blame yourself—you were not so far in the wrong as you suppose. Bathsheba, suppose you had real complete proof that you are what, in fact, you are—a widow—would you repair the old wrong to me by marrying me?"

"I cannot say. I shouldn't yet, at any rate."

"But you might at some future time of your life?"

"O yes, I might at some time."

"Well, then, do you know that without further proof of any kind you may marry again in about six years from the present—subject to nobody's objection or blame?"

"O yes," she said, quickly, "I know all that. But don't talk of it—seven or six years—where may we all be by that time?"

"They will soon glide by, and it will seem an astonishingly short time to look back upon when they are past—much less than to look forward to now."

"Yes, yes; I have found that in my own experience."

"Now, listen once more," Boldwood pleaded. "If I wait that time, will you marry me? You own that you owe me amends—let that be your way of making them."

"But, Mr. Boldwood—six years——"

"Do you want to be the wife of any other man?"

"No indeed! I mean, that I don't like to talk about this matter now. Perhaps it is not proper, and I ought not to allow it. Let us drop it for the present, please do!"

"Of course, I'll drop the subject if you wish. But propriety has nothing to do with reasons. I am a middle-aged man, willing to protect you for the remainder of our lives. On your side, at least, there is no passion or blameable haste—on mine, perhaps, there is. But I can't help seeing that if you choose from a feeling of pity, and, as you say, a wish to make amends, to make a bargain with me for a far-ahead time—an agreement which will set all things right and make me happy, late though it may be—there is no fault to be found with you as a woman. Hadn't I the first place beside you? Haven't you been almost mine once already? Surely you can say to me as much as this, you will have me back again should circumstances permit? Now, pray speak! O Bathsheba, promise—it is only a little promise—that if you marry again, you will marry me!"

His tone was so excited that she almost feared him at this moment, even whilst she sympathized. It was a simple physical fear—the weak of the strong; there was no emotional aversion or inner repugnance. She said, with some distress in her voice, for she remembered vividly his outburst on the Yalbury Road, and shrank from a repetition of his anger:

"I will never marry another man whilst you wish me to be your wife, whatever comes—but to say more—you have taken me so by surprise——"

"But let it stand in these simple words—that in six years' time you will be my wife? Unexpected accidents we'll not mention, because those, of course, must be given way to. Now, this time I know you will keep your word."

"That's why I hesitate to give it."

"But do give it! Remember the past, and be kind."

She breathed; and then said mournfully: "O what shall I do! I don't love you, and I much fear that I never shall love you as much as a woman ought to love a husband. If you, sir, know that, and I can yet give you happiness by a mere promise without feeling, and just in friendliness, to marry at the end of six years, it is a great honour to me. And if you value such an act of friendship from a woman who doesn't esteem herself as she did, and has little love left, why I—I will——"

"Promise!"

"I'm afraid there's a hitch in that argument," said Oak, with a grave smile.

She did not reply at once, and then saying "Good evening, Mr. Oak," went away.

She had spoken frankly, and neither asked nor expected any reply from Gabriel more satisfactory than that she had obtained. Yet in the centremost parts of her complicated heart there existed at this minute a little pang of disappointment, for a reason she would not allow herself to recognise. Oak had not once wished her free that he might marry her himself—had not once said, "I could wait for you as well as he." That was the insect sting. Not that she would have listened to any such hypothesis. Oh no—for wasn't she saying all the time that such thoughts of the future were improper, and wasn t Gabriel far too poor a man to speak sentiment to her? Yet he might have just hinted about that old love of his, and asked, in a playful offhand way, if he might speak of it. It would have seemed pretty and sweet, if no more; and then she would have shown how kind and inoffensive a woman's "No" can sometimes be. But to give such cool advice—the very advice she had asked for—it ruffled our heroine all the afternoon.

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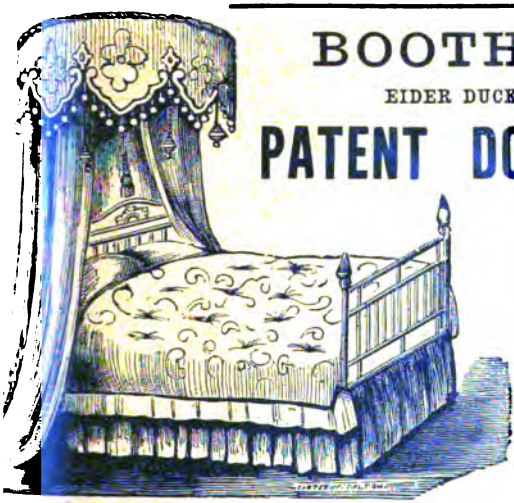

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cool mood about Weatherbury people was changed. He had not expected her to exercise this power over him in the twinkling of an eye. Should he go on, and care nothing? He could not bring himself to do that. Beyond a politic wish to remain unknown, there suddenly arose in him now a sense of shame at the possibility that his attractive young wife, who already despised him, should despise him more by discovering him in so mean a condition after so long a time. He actually blushed at the thought, and was vexed beyond measure that his sentiments of dislike towards Weatherbury should have led him to dally about the country in this way. But Troy was never more clever than when absolutely at his wit's end. He hastily thrust aside the curtain dividing his own little dressing space from that of the manager and proprietor, who now appeared as the individual called Tom King as far down as his waist, and the aforesaid respectable manager thence to his toes.

"Here 's the d—— to pay!" said Troy.

"How 's that?"

"Why, there 's a good-for-nothing scamp in the tent I don't want to see, who'll discover me and nab me as sure as Satan if I open my mouth. What 's to be done?"

"You must appear now, I think."

"I can't."

"But the play must proceed."

"Do you give out that Turpin has got a bad cold, and can't speak his part, but that he 'll perform it just the same without speaking."

The proprietor shook his head.

"Anyhow, play or no play, I won't open my mouth," said Troy, firmly.

"Very well, then let me see. I tell you how we 'll manage," said the other, who perhaps felt it would be extremely awkward to offend his leading man just at this time. "I won't tell them anything about your keeping silence; go on with the piece and say nothing, doing what you can by a judicious wink now and then, and a few indomitable nods in the heroic places, you know. They 'll never find out that the speeches are omitted."

This seemed feasible enough, for Turpin's speeches were not many or long, the fascination of the piece lying entirely in the action; and accordingly the play began, and at the appointed time Black Bess leapt into the grassy circle amid the plaudits of the spectators. At the turnpike scene, where Bess and Turpin are hotly pursued at midnight by the officers, and the half-awake gate-keeper in his tasselled nightcap denies that any horseman has passed, Coggan uttered a broad-chested, "Well done!" which could be heard all over the fair above the bleating, and Poorgrass smiled delightedly with a nice sense of dramatic contrast between our hero, who coolly leaps the gate, and halting justice in the form of his enemies, who must needs pull up cumbersomely and wait to be let through. At the death of Tom King, he could not refrain from seizing

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THOY NEXT ADVANCED INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM, TOOK OFF HIS CAP —

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1874.

Far from the Madding Crowd.

CHAPTER LII.

Converging Courses.

I.

HRISTMAS-EVE came, and a party that Boldwood was to give in the evening was the great subject of talk in Weatherbury. It was not that the rarity of Christmas parties in the parish made this one a wonder, but that Boldwood should be the giver. The announcement had had an abnormal and incongruous sound, as if one should hear of croquet-playing in a cathedral aisle, or that some much-respected judge was going upon the stage. That the party was intended to be a truly jovial one, there was no room for doubt. A large bough of mistletoe had been brought from the woods that day, and suspended in the hall of the bachelor's home. Holly and ivy had followed in armfuls. From six that morning till past noon the huge wood fire in the kitchen roared and sparkled at its highest, the kettle, the saucepan, and the three-legged

pot appearing in the midst of the flames like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; moreover, roasting and basting operations were continually carried on in front of the genial blaze.

As it grew later, the fire was made up in the large long hall into which the staircase descended, and all encumbrances were cleared out for dancing. The log which was to form the back-brand of the evening fire was the uncleft trunk of a tree, so unwieldy that it could be neither brought nor rolled to its place; and accordingly four men were to be observed dragging and heaving it in by chains and levers as the hour of assembly drew near.

In spite of all this, the spirit of revelry was wanting in the atmosphere of the house. Such a thing had never been attempted before by its owner, and it was now done as by a wrench. Intended gaieties would insist upon appearing like solemn grandeurs, the organisation of the whole effort was carried out coldly by hirelings, and a shadow seemed to move about the rooms, saying that the proceedings were unnatural to the place and the lone man who lived therein, and hence not good.

II.

Bathsheba was at this time in her room, dressing for the event. She had called for candles, and Liddy entered and placed one on each side of her mistress's glass.

"Don't go away, Liddy," said Bathsheba, almost timidly. "I am foolishly agitated—I cannot tell why. I wish I had not been obliged to go to this dance; but there's no escaping now. I have not spoken to Mr. Boldwood since the autumn, when I promised to see him at Christmas on business, but I had no idea there was to be anything of this kind."

"But I would go now," said Liddy, who was going with her; for Boldwood had been indiscriminate in his invitations.

"Yes, I shall make my appearance, of course," said Bathsheba. "But I am *the cause* of the party, and that upsets me. Don't tell, Liddy."

"O no, ma'am. You the cause of it, ma'am?"

"Yes. I am the reason of the party—I. If it had not been for me, there would never have been one. I can't explain any more—there's no more to be explained. I wish I had never seen Weatherbury."

"That's wicked of you—to wish to be worse off than you are."

"No, Liddy. I have never been free from trouble since I have lived here, and this party is likely to bring me more. Now, fetch my black silk dress, and see how it sits upon me."

"But you will leave off that, surely, ma'am? You have been a widow-lady fourteen months, and ought to brighten up a little on such a night as this."

"Is it necessary? No, I will appear as usual, for if I were to wear any light dress people would say things about me, and I should seem to be rejoicing when I am solemn all the time. The party doesn't suit me a bit; but never mind, stay and help to finish me off."

III.

Boldwood was dressing also at this hour. A tailor from Casterbridge was with him, assisting him in the operation of trying on a new coat that had just been brought home.

Never had Boldwood been so fastidious, unreasonable about the fit, and generally difficult to please. The tailor walked round and round him, tugged at the waist, pulled the sleeve, pressed out the collar, and for the first time in his experience Boldwood was not bored. Times had been when the farmer had exclaimed against all such niceties as childish, but now no philosophic or hasty rebuke whatever was provoked by this man for attaching as much importance to a crease in the coat as to an earthquake in South America. Boldwood at last expressed himself nearly satisfied, and paid the bill, the tailor passing out of the door just as Oak came in to report progress for the day.

"Oh, Oak," said Boldwood; "I shall of course see you here to-night. Make yourself merry. I am determined that neither expense nor trouble shall be spared."

"I'll try to be here, sir, though perhaps it may not be very early," said Gabriel, quietly. "I am glad indeed to see such a change in ye from what it used to be."

"Yes—I must own it—I am bright to-night: cheerful and more than cheerful—so much so that I am almost sad again with the sense that all of it is passing away. And sometimes, when I am excessively hopeful and blithe, a trouble is looming in the distance: so that I often get to look upon gloom in me with content, and to fear a happy mood. Still this may be absurd—I feel that it is absurd. Perhaps my day is dawning at last."

"I hope it will be a long and a fair one."

"Thank you—thank you. Yet perhaps my cheerfulness rests on a slender hope. And yet I trust my hope. It is faith, not hope. I think this time I reckon with my host. Oak, my hands are a little shaky, or something, I can't tie this neckerchief properly. Perhaps you will tie it for me. The fact is, I have not been well lately, you know."

"I am sorry to hear that, sir."

"Oh, it's nothing. I want it done as well as you can, please. Is there any late knot in fashion, Oak?"

"I don't know, sir," said Oak. His tone had sunk to sadness.

Boldwood approached Gabriel, and as Oak tied the neckerchief the farmer went on, feverishly—

"Does a woman keep her promise, Gabriel?"

"If it is not inconvenient to her she may."

"—Or rather an implied promise."

"I won't answer for her implying," said Oak, with faint bitterness. "That's a word as full o' holes as a sieve with them."

"Oak, don't talk like that. You have got quite cynical lately—how

is it? We seem to have shifted our positions: I have become the young and hopeful man, and you the old and unbelieving one. However, does a woman keep a promise, not to marry, but to enter on an engagement to marry at some time? Now you know women better than I—tell me."

"I am afeard you honour my understanding too much. However, she may keep such a promise, if it is made with an honest maning to repair a wrong."

"It has not gone far yet, but I think it will soon—yes, I know it will," he said, in an impulsive whisper. "I have pressed her upon the subject, and she inclines to be kind to me, and to think of me as a husband at a long future time, and that's enough for me. How can I expect more? She has a notion that a widow should not marry within seven years of her husband's death—that her own self shouldn't, I mean—because his body was not found. It may be merely this legal reason which influences her, or it may be a religious one, but she is reluctant to talk on the point. Yet she has promised—implied—that she will ratify an engagement to-night."

"Seven years," murmured Oak.

"No, no—it's no such thing!" he said, with impatience. "Five years, nine months, and a few days. Fifteen months nearly have passed since his death, and is there anything so wonderful in an engagement of little more than five years?"

"It seems long in a forward view. Don't build too much upon such promises, sir. Remember, you have once been deceived. Her maning may be good; but there—she's young yet."

"Deceived? Never!" said Boldwood vehemently. "She never promised me at that first time, and hence she did not break her promise. If she promises me, she'll marry me. Bathsheba is a woman to her word."

IV.

Troy was sitting in a small apartment in a small tavern at Casterbridge, smoking and drinking a steaming mixture from a glass. A knock was given at the door, and Pennyways entered.

"Well, have you seen him?" Troy enquired, pointing to a chair.

"Boldwood?"

"No—Lawyer Long."

"He wadn' at home. I went there first, too."

"That's a nuisance."

"'Tis rather, I suppose."

"Yet I don't see that, because a man appears to be drowned and was not, he should be liable for anything. I shan't ask any lawyer—not I."

"But that's not it, exactly. If a man changes his name and so forth, and takes steps to deceive the world and his own wife, he's a cheat, and that in the eye of the law is ayless a rogue, and that is ayless a vagabond; and that's a punishable situation."

"Ha-ha! Well done, Pennyways." Troy had laughed, but it was with some anxiety that he said, "Now what I want to know is this, do you think there's really anything going on between her and Boldwood? Upon my soul, I should never have believed it! How she must detest me. Have you found out whether she has encouraged him?"

"I haen't been able to learn. There's a deal of feeling on his side seemingly, but I don't answer for her. I didn't know a word about any such thing till yesterday, and all I heard then was that she was gwine to the party at his house to-night. This is the first time she has ever gone there, they say. And they say that she've not so much as spoke to him since they were at Greenhill Fair: but what can folk believe o't? However, she's not fond of him—quite offish and quite careless, I know."

"I'm not so sure of that. . . . She's a handsome woman, Pennyways, is she not? Own that you never saw a finer or more splendid creature in your life. Upon my honour when I set eyes upon her that day I wondered what I could have been made of to be able to leave her by herself so long. And then I was hampered with that bothering show, which I'm free of at last, thank the stars." He smoked on awhile, and then added, "How did she look when you passed by yesterday?"

"Oh, she took no great heed of me, ye may well fancy; but she looked well enough, far's I know. Just flashed her haughty eyes upon my poor scram body, and then let them go past me to what was yond, much as if I'd been no more than a leafless tree. She had just got off her mare to look at the last wring-down of cider for the year; she had been riding, and so her colours were up and her breath rather quick, so that her bosom plimmed and fell—plimmed and fell—every time plain to my eye. Ay, and there were the fellers round her wringing down the cheese and bustling about and saying, 'Ware o' the pommy, ma'am: 'twill spoil yer gown.' 'Never mind me,' says she. Then Gabe brought her some of the new cider, and she must needs go drinking it through a strawmote, and not in a naterel way at all. 'Liddy,' says she, 'bring indoors a few gallons, and I'll make some cider-wine.' Sergeant, I was no more to her than a morsel of scroff in the fuel-house."

"I must go and find her out at once—O yes, I see that—I must go. Oak is head man still, isn't he?"

"Yes, 'a b'lieve. And at Lower Farm too. He manages everything."

"'T will puzzle him to manage her, or any other man of his compass."

"I don't know about that. She can't do without him, and knowing it well he's pretty independent. And she've a few soft corners to her mind—though I've never been able to get into one, the devil's in't.

"Ah, Baily, she's a notch above you, and you must own it: a higher class of animal—a finer tissue. However, stick to me, and neither this haughty goddess, dashing piece of womanhood, Juno—wife of mine (Juno was a goddess, you know), nor anybody else shall hurt you. But all this wants looking into, I perceive. What with one thing and another, I see that my work is well cut out for me."

V.

"How do I look to-night, Liddy?" said Bathsheba, giving a final adjustment to her dress before leaving the glass.

"I never saw you look so well before. Yes—I'll tell you when you looked like it—that night a year and half ago when you came in so wild-like and scolded us for making remarks about you and Mr. Troy."

"Everybody will think that I am setting myself to captivate Mr. Boldwood, I suppose," she murmured. "At least they'll say so. Can't my hair be brushed down a little flatter? I dread going—yet I dread the risk of wounding him by staying away."

"Anyhow, ma'am, you can't well be dressed plainer than you are, unless you go in sackcloth at once. 'Tis your excitement is what makes you look so noticeable to-night."

"I don't know what's the matter, I feel wretched at one time and buoyant at another. I wish I could have continued quite alone as I have been for the last year or so, with no hopes and no fears, and no pleasure and no grief."

"Now just suppose Mr. Boldwood should ask you—only just suppose it—to run away with him, what would you do, ma'am?"

"Liddy—none of that," said Bathsheba, gravely. "Mind, I won't hear joking on any such matter. Do you hear?"

"I beg pardon, ma'am. But knowing what rum things we women are, I just said—however I won't speak of it again."

"No marrying for me yet for many a year; if ever, 'twill be for reasons very very different from those you think or others will believe. Now get my cloak, for it is time to go."

VI.

"Oak," said Boldwood, "before you go I want to mention what has been passing in my mind lately—that little arrangement we made about your share in the farm I mean. That share is small, too small, considering how little I attend to business now, and how much time and thought you give to it. Well, since the world is brightening for me, I want to show my sense of it by increasing your proportion in the partnership. I'll make a memorandum of the arrangement which struck me as likely to be convenient, for I haven't time to talk about it now; and then we'll discuss it at our leisure. My intention is ultimately to retire from the management altogether, and until you can take all the expenditure upon your shoulders, I'll be a sleeping partner in the stock. Then, if I marry her—and I hope—I feel I shall, why——"

"Pray don't speak of it, sir," said Oak, hastily. "We don't know what may happen. So many upsets may befall ye. There's many a slip, as they say—and I would advise you—I know you'll pardon me this once—not to be *too sure*."

"I know, I know. But the feeling I have about increasing your share

is on account of what I know of you. Oak, I have learnt a little about your secret: your interest in her is more than that of a bailiff for an employer. But you have behaved like a man, and I, as a sort of successful rival—successful partly through your goodness of heart—should like definitely to show my sense of your friendship under what must have been a great pain to you."

"Oh, that's not necessary, thank ye," said Oak, hurriedly. "I must get used to such as that; other men have, and so shall I."

Oak then left him. He was uneasy on Boldwood's account, for he saw anew that this constant passion of the farmer made him not the man he once had been.

As Boldwood continued awhile in his room alone—ready and dressed to receive his company—the mood of anxiety about his appearance seemed to pass away, and to be succeeded by a deep solemnity. He looked out of the window, and regarded the dim outline of the trees upon the sky, and the twilight deepening to darkness.

Then he went to a locked closet, and took from a locked drawer therein a small circular case the size of a pill-box, and was about to put it into his pocket. But he lingered to open the cover and take a momentary glance inside. It contained a woman's finger-ring, set all the way round with small diamonds, and from its appearance had evidently been recently purchased. Boldwood's eyes dwelt upon its many sparkles a long time, though that its material aspect concerned him little was plain from his manner and mien, which were those of a mind following out the presumed thread of that jewel's future history.

The noise of wheels at the front of the house became audible. Boldwood closed the box, stowed it away carefully in his pocket, and went out upon the landing. The old man who was his indoor factotum came at the same moment to the foot of the stairs.

"They be coming, sir—lots of 'em—a foot and a driving!"

"I was coming down this moment. Those wheels I heard—is it Mrs. Troy?"

"No, sir—'tis not she yet."

A reserved and sombre expression had returned to Boldwood's face again, but it poorly cloaked his feelings when he pronounced Bathsheba's name; and his feverish anxiety continued to show its existence by a galloping motion of his fingers upon the side of his thigh as he went down the stairs.

VII.

"How does this cover me?" said Troy to Pennyways. "Nobody would recognise me now, I'm sure."

He was buttoning on a heavy grey overcoat of Noachian cut, with cape and high collar, the latter being erect and rigid, like a girdling wall, and nearly reaching to the verge of a travelling cap which was pulled down over his ears.

Pennyways snuffed the candle, and then looked up and deliberately inspected Troy.

"You've made up your mind to go then?" he said.

"Made up my mind? Yes, of course I have."

"Why not write to her. 'Tis a very queer corner that you have got into, sergeant. You see all these things will come to light if you go back, and they won't sound well at all. Faith, if I was you I'd even bide as you be—a single man of the name of Francis. A good wife is good, but the best wife is not so good as no wife at all. Now that's my outspoke mind, and I've been called a long-headed feller here and there."

"All nonsense!" said Troy, angrily. "There she is with plenty of money, and a house and farm, and horses, and comfort, and here am I living from hand to mouth—a needy adventurer. Besides, it is no use talking now; it is too late, and I am glad of it; I've been seen and recognised here this very afternoon. I should have gone back to her the day after the fair, if it hadn't been for you talking about the law, and rubbish about getting a separation; and I don't put it off any longer. What the deuce put it into my head to run away at all, I can't think. Humbugging sentiment—that's what it was. But what man on earth was to know that his wife would be in such a hurry to get rid of his name!"

"I should have known it. She's bad enough for anything."

"Pennyways, mind who you are talking to."

"Well, sergeant, all I say is this, that if I were you I'd go abroad again where I came from—'tisn't too late to do it now. I wouldn't stir up the business and get a bad name for the sake of living with her—for all that about your play-acting is sure to come out, you know, although you think otherwise. My eyes and limbs, there'll be a racket if you go back just now—in the middle of Boldwood's Christmasing!"

"H'm, yes. I expect I shall not be a very welcome guest if he has her there," said the sergeant, with a slight laugh. "A sort of Alonzo the Brave; and when I go in the guests will sit in silence and fear, and all laughter and pleasure will be hushed, and the lights in the chamber burn blue, and the worms—Ugh, horrible!—Ring for some more brandy, Pennyways, I felt an awful shudder just then. Well, what is there besides? A stick—I must have a walking-stick."

Pennyways now felt himself to be in something of a difficulty, for should Bathsheba and Troy become reconciled it would be necessary to regain her good opinion if he would secure the patronage of her husband. "I sometimes think she likes ye yet, and is a good woman at bottom," he said, as a saving sentence. "But there's no telling to a certainty from a body's outside. Well, you'll do as you like about going, of course, sergeant, and as for me, I'll do as you tell me."

"Now, let me see what the time is," said Troy, after emptying his glass in one draught as he stood. "Half-past six o'clock. I shall not hurry along the road, and shall be there then before nine."

CHAPTER LIII.

CONCURRITUR: HORÆ MOMENTO.

OUTSIDE the front of Boldwood's house a group of men stood in the dark, with their faces towards the door, which occasionally opened and closed for the passage of some guest or servant, when a golden rod of light would stripe the ground for the moment and vanish again, leaving nothing outside but the glowworm shine of the pale lamp amid the evergreens over the door.

"He was seen in Casterbridge this afternoon—so the boy said," one of them remarked in a whisper. "And I for one believe it. His body was never found, you know."

"'Tis a strange story," said the next. "You may depend upon 't that she knows nothing about it."

"Not a word."

"Perhaps he don't mean that she shall," said another man.

"If he's alive and here in the neighbourhood, he means mischief," said the first. "Poor young thing: I do pity her, if 'tis true. He'll drag her to the dogs."

"Oh, no; he'll settle down quiet enough," said one disposed to take a more hopeful view of the case.

"What a fool she must have been ever to have had anything to do with the man! She is so self-willed and independent too, that one is more minded to say it serves her right than pity her."

"No, no! I don't hold with ye there. She was no otherwise than a girl mind, and how could she tell what the man was made of. If 'tis really true, 'tis too hard a punishment, and more than she ought to hae.—Hullo, who's that?" This was to some footsteps that were heard approaching.

"William Smallbury," said a dim figure in the shades, coming up and joining them. "Dark as a hedge to-night, isn't it. I all but missed the plank over the river ath'art there in the bottom—never did such a thing before in my life. Be ye any of Boldwood's workfolk?" He peered into their faces.

"Yes—all o' us. We met here a few minutes ago."

"O, I hear now—that's Sam Samway: thought I knowed the voice, too. Going in?"

"Presently. But I say, William," Samway whispered, "have ye heard this strange tale?"

"What—that about Sergeant Troy being seen, d'ye mean, souls?" said Smallbury, also lowering his voice.

"Ay: in Casterbridge."

"Yes, I have. Laban Tall named a hint of it to me, but now—but I don't think it. Hark, here Laban comes himself, 'a b'lieve." A footstep drew near.

"Laban?"

"Yes, 'tis I," said Tall.

"Have ye heard any more about that?"

"No," said Tall, joining the group. "And I'm inclined to think we'd better keep quiet. If so be 'tis not true, 'twill flurry her, and do her much harm to repeat it; and if so be 'tis true, 'twill do no good to forestall her time o' trouble. God send that it may be a lie, for though Henery Fray and some of 'em do speak against her, she's never been anything but fair to me. She's hot and hasty, but she's a brave girl who'll never tell a lie however much the truth may harm her, and I've no cause to wish her evil."

"She never do tell women's little lies, that's true; and 'tis a thing that can be said of very few. Ay, all the harm she thinks she says to yer face: there's nothing underhand wi' her."

They stood silent then, every man busied with his own thoughts, during which interval sounds of merriment could be heard within. Then the front door again opened, the rays streamed out, the well-known form of Boldwood was seen in the rectangular area of light, the door closed, and Boldwood walked slowly down the path.

"'Tis master," one of the men whispered, as he neared them. "We'd better stand quiet—he'll go in again directly. He would think it unseemly o' us to be loitering here."

Boldwood came on, and passed by the men without seeing them, they being under the bushes on the grass. He paused, leant over the gate, and breathed a long breath. They heard low words come from him.

"I hope to God she'll come, or this night will be nothing but misery to me. O my darling, my darling, why do you keep me in suspense like this!"

He said this to himself, and they all distinctly heard it. Boldwood remained silent after that, and the noise from indoors was again just audible, until, a few minutes later, light wheels could be distinguished coming down the hill. They drew nearer, and ceased at the gate. Boldwood hastened back to the door, and opened it; and the light shone upon Bathsheba coming up the path.

Boldwood compressed his emotion to mere welcome: the men marked her light laugh and apology as she met him: he took her into the house; and the door closed again.

"Gracious heaven, I didn't know it was like that with him!" said one of the men. "I thought that fancy of his was over long ago."

"You don't know much of master, if you thought that," said Samway.

"I wouldn't he should know we heard what 'a said for the world," remarked a third.

"I wish we had told of the report at once," the first uneasily continued. "More harm may come of this than we know of. Poor Mr. Boldwood, it will be hard upon en. I wish Troy was in ——. Well,

God forgive me for such a wish! A scoundrel to play a poor wife such tricks. Nothing has prospered in Weatherbury since he came here. And now I've no heart to go in. Let's look into Warren's, shall us neighbours?"

Samway, Tall, and Smallbury agreed to go, and went out at the gate, the remaining ones entering the house. The three soon drew near the malt-house, approaching it from the adjoining orchard, and not by way of the street. The pane of glass was illuminated as usual. Smallbury was a little in advance of the rest, when, pausing, he turned suddenly to his companions and said, "Hist! See there."

The light from the pane was now perceived to be shining not upon the ivied wall as usual, but upon some object close to the glass. It was a human face.

"Let's come closer," whispered Samway; and they approached on tiptoe. There was no disbelieving the report any longer. Troy's face was almost close to the pane, and he was looking in. Not only was he looking in, but he appeared to have been arrested by a conversation which was in progress in the malt-house, the voices of the interlocutors being those of Oak and the maltster.

"The spree is all in her honour, isn't it—hey?" said the old man. "Although he made believe 'tis only keeping up o' Christmas."

"I cannot say," replied Oak.

"O 'tis true enough, faith. I can't understand Farmer Boldwood being such a fool at his time of life as to ho and hanker after thik woman in the way 'a do, and she not care a bit about en."

The men, after recognising Troy's features, withdrew across the orchard as quietly as they had come. The air was big with Bathsheba's fortunes to-night: every word everywhere concerned her. When they were quite out of earshot all by one instinct paused.

"It gave me quite a turn—his face," said Tall, breathing.

"And so it did me," said Samway. "What's to be done?"

"I don't see that 'tis any business of ours," Smallbury murmured dubiously.

"O yes. 'Tis a thing which is everybody's business," said Samway. "We know very well that master's on a wrong tack, and that she's quite in the dark, and we should let 'em know at once. Laban, you know her best—you'd better go and ask to speak to her."

"I baint fit for any such thing," said Laban, nervously. "I should think William ought to do it if anybody. He's oldest."

"I shall have nothing to do with it," said Smallbury. "'Tis a ticklish business altogether. Why, he'll go on to her himself in a few minutes, ye'll see."

"We don't know that he will. Come, Laban."

"Very well, if I must I must, I suppose," Tall reluctantly answered. "What must I say?"

"Just ask to see master."

"O no; I shan't speak to Mr. Boldwood. If I tell anybody, 'twill be mistress."

"Very well," said Samway.

Laban then went to the door. When he opened it the hum of bustle rolled out as a wave upon a still strand—the assemblage being immediately inside in the hall—and was deadened to a murmur as he closed it again. Each man waited intently, and looked around at the dark tree tops gently rocking against the sky and occasionally shivering in a slight wind, as if he took interest in the scene, which neither did. One of them began walking up and down, and then came to where he started from and stopped again, with a sense that walking was a thing not worth doing now.

"I should think Laban must have seen mistress by this time," said Smallbury, breaking the silence. "Perhaps she won't come and speak to him."

The door opened. Tall appeared, and joined them.

"Well?" said both.

"I didn't like to ask for her after all," Laban faltered out. "They were all in such a stir, trying to put a little spirit into the party. Somehow the fun seems to hang fire, though everything's there that a heart can desire, and I couldn't for my soul interfere and throw damp upon it—if 'twas to save my life, I couldn't!"

"I suppose we had better all go in together," said Samway, gloomily. "Perhaps I may have a chance of saying a word to master."

So the men entered the hall, which was the room selected and arranged for the gathering because of its size. The younger men and maids were at last just beginning a dance. Bathsheba had been perplexed how to act, for she was not much more than a slim young maid herself, and the weight of stateliness sat heavy upon her. Sometimes she thought she ought not to have come under any circumstances; then she considered what cold unkindness that would have been, and finally resolved upon the middle course of staying for about an hour only, and gliding off unobserved, having from the first made up her mind that she could on no account dance, sing, or take any active part in the proceedings.

Her allotted hour having been passed in chatting and looking on, Bathsheba told Liddy not to hurry herself, and went to the small parlour to prepare for departure, which, like the hall, was decorated with holly and ivy, and well lighted up.

Nobody was in the room, but she had hardly been there a moment when the master of the house entered.

"Mrs. Troy—you are not going?" he said. "We've hardly begun."

"If you'll excuse me, I should like to go now." Her manner was restive, for she remembered her promise, and imagined what he was about to say. "But as it is not late," she added, "I can walk home, and leave my man and Liddy to come when they choose."

"I've been trying to get an opportunity of speaking to you," said Boldwood. "You know perhaps what I long to say?"

Bathsheba silently looked on the floor.

"You do give it?" he said, eagerly.

"What?" she whispered.

"Now, that's evasion! Why, the promise. I don't want to intrude upon you at all, or to let it become known to anybody. But do give your word! A mere business compact, you know, between two people who are beyond the influence of passion." Boldwood knew how false this picture was as regarded himself; but he had proved that it was the only tone in which she would allow him to approach her. "A promise to marry me at the end of five years and three quarters. You owe it to me!"

"I feel that I do," said Bathsheba; "that is, if you demand it. But I am a changed woman—an unhappy woman—and not—not——"

"You are still a very beautiful woman," said Boldwood. Honesty and pure conviction suggested the remark, unaccompanied by any perception that it might have been adopted by blunt flattery to soothe and win her.

However, it had not much effect now, for she said, in a passionless murmur which was in itself a proof of her words: "I have no feeling in the matter at all. And I don't at all know what is right to do in my difficult position, and I have nobody to advise me. But I give my promise, if I must. I give it as the rendering of a debt."

"You'll marry me between five and six years hence."

"Don't press me too hard. I'll marry nobody else."

"But surely you will name the time, or there's nothing in the promise at all."

"O I don't know, pray let me go!" she said, her bosom beginning to rise. "I am afraid what to do! I want to be just to you, and to be that seems to be wronging myself, and perhaps it is breaking the commandments. There is a shadow of a doubt of his death, and then it is dreadful; let me ask a solicitor, Mr. Boldwood, if I ought or no!"

"Say the words, dear one, and the subject shall be dismissed; a blissful loving intimacy of six years, and then marriage—O Bathsheba, say them!" he begged in a husky voice, unable to sustain the forms of mere friendship any longer. "Promise yourself to me; I deserve it, indeed, I do, for I have loved you more than anybody in the world. And if I said hasty words and showed uncalled-for heat of manner towards you, believe me, dear, I did not mean to distress you; I was in agony, Bathsheba, and I did not know what I said. You wouldn't let a dog suffer what I have suffered, could you but know it! Sometimes I shrink from your knowing what I have felt for you, and sometimes I am distressed that all of it you never will know. Be gracious, and give up a little to me, when I would give up my life for you!"

The trimmings of her dress, as they quivered against the light, showed how agitated she was, and at last she burst out crying. "And

you'll not—press me—about anything more—if I say in five or six years?" she sobbed, when she had power to frame the words.

"Yes, then I'll leave it to time."

She waited a moment. "Very well. I'll marry you in six years from this day, if we both live," she said solemnly.

"And you'll take this as a token from me?"

Boldwood had come close to her side, and now he clasped one of her hands in both his own, and lifted it to his breast.

"What is it? O I cannot wear a ring!" she exclaimed, on seeing what he held; "besides, I wouldn't have a soul know that it's an engagement. Perhaps it is improper. Besides, we are not engaged in the usual sense, are we? Don't insist, Mr. Boldwood—don't!" In her trouble at not being able to get her hand away from him at once, she stamped passionately on the floor with one foot, and tears crowded to her eyes again.

"It means simply a pledge—no sentiment—the seal of a practical compact," he said more quietly, but still retaining her hand in his firm grasp. "Come, now!" And Boldwood slipped the ring on her finger.

"I cannot wear it," she said, weeping as if her heart would break. "You frighten me, almost. So wild a scheme! Please let me go home!"

"Only to-night: wear it just to-night, to please me."

Bathsheba sat down in a chair, and buried her face in her handkerchief, though Boldwood kept her hand yet. At length she said, in a sort of hopeless whisper,—

"Very well, then, I will to-night, if you wish it so earnestly. Now loosen my hand; I will, indeed I will wear it to-night."

"And it shall be the beginning of a pleasant secret courtship of six years, with a wedding at the end?"

"It must be, I suppose, since you will have it so!" she said, fairly beaten into non-resistance.

Boldwood pressed her hand, and allowed it to drop in her lap. "I am happy now," he said. "God bless you!"

He left the room, and when he thought she might be sufficiently composed sent one of the maids to her. Bathsheba cloaked the effects of the late scene as she best could, followed the girl, and in a few moments came downstairs with her hat and cloak on, ready to go. To get to the door it was necessary to pass through the hall, and before doing so she paused on the bottom of the staircase which descended into one corner, to take a last look at the gathering.

There was no music or dancing in progress just now. At the lower end, which had been arranged for the workfolk specially, a group conversed in whispers, and with clouded looks. Boldwood was standing by the fireplace, and he, too, though so absorbed in visions arising from her promise that he scarcely saw anything, seemed at that moment to have observed their peculiar manner and their looks askance.

"What is it you are in doubt about, men?" he said.

One of them turned and replied uneasily: "It was something Laban heard of, that's all, sir."

"News? Anybody married or engaged, born or dead?" enquired the farmer, gaily. "Tell it to us, Tall. One would think from your looks and mysterious ways that it was something very dreadful indeed."

"O no, sir, nobody is dead," said Tall.

"I wish somebody was," said Samway, in a whisper.

"What do you say, Samway?" ased Boldwood, somewhat sharply. "If you have anything to say, speak out; if not, get up another dance."

"Mrs. Troy has come downstairs," said Samway to Tall. "If you want to tell her, you had better do it now."

"Do you know what they mean?" the farmer asked Bathsheba across the room.

"I don't in the least," said Bathsheba.

There was a smart rapping at the door. One of the men opened it instantly, and went outside.

"Mrs. Troy is wanted," he said, on returning.

"Quite ready," said Bathsheba. "Though I didn't tell them to send."

"It is a stranger, ma'am," said the man by the door.

"A stranger?" she said.

"Ask him to come in," said Boldwood.

The message was given, and Troy, wrapped up to his eyes as we have seen him, stood in the doorway.

There was an unearthly silence, all looking towards the new-comer. Those who had just learnt that he was in the neighbourhood recognised him instantly; those who did not, were perplexed. Nobody noted Bathsheba. She was leaning on the stairs. Her brow had heavily contracted; her whole face was pallid, her lips apart, her eyes rigidly staring at their visitor.

Boldwood was among those who did not notice that he was Troy. "Come in, come in!" he repeated, cheerfully, "and drain a Christmas beaker with us, stranger!"

Troy next advanced into the middle of the room, took off his cap, turned down his coat collar, and looked Boldwood in the face. Even then Boldwood did not recognise that the impersonator of Heaven's persistent irony towards him, who had once before broken in upon his bliss, scourged him, and snatched his delight away, had come to do these things a second time. Troy began to laugh a mechanical laugh: Boldwood recognised him now.

Troy turned to Bathsheba. The poor girl's wretchedness at this time was beyond all fancy or narration. She had sunk down on the lowest stair; and there she sat, her mouth blue and dry, and her dark eyes fixed vacantly upon him, as if she wondered whether it were not all a terrible illusion.

Then Troy spoke. "Bathsheba, I come here for you!"

She made no reply.

"Come home with me: come!"

Bathsheba moved her feet a little, but did not rise. Troy went across to her.

"Come, madam, do you hear what I say?" he said, peremptorily.

A strange voice came from the fireplace—a voice sounding far off and confined, as if from a dungeon. Hardly a soul in the assembly recognised the thin tones to be those of Boldwood. Sudden despair had transformed him.

"Bathsheba, go with your husband!"

Nevertheless, she did not move. The truth was that Bathsheba was beyond the pale of activity—and yet not in a swoon. She was in a state of mental *gutta serena*; her mind was for the minute totally deprived of light at the same time that no obscuration was apparent from without.

Troy stretched out his hand to pull her towards him, when she quickly shrank back. This visible dread of him seemed to irritate Troy, and he seized her arm and pulled it sharply. Whether his grasp pinched her, or whether his mere touch was the cause, was never known, but at the moment of his seizure she writhed, and gave a quick, low scream.

The scream had been heard but a few seconds when it was followed by a sudden deafening report that echoed through the room and stupefied them all. The oak partition shook with the concussion, and the place was filled with grey smoke.

In bewilderment they turned their eyes to Boldwood. At his back, as he stood before the fireplace, was a gun-rack, as is usual in farm-houses, constructed to hold two guns. When Bathsheba had cried out in her husband's grasp Boldwood's face of gnashing despair had changed. The veins had swollen, and a frenzied look had gleamed in his eye. He had turned quickly, taken one of the guns, cocked it, and at once discharged it at Troy.

Troy fell. The distance apart of the two men was so small that the charge of shot did not spread in the least, but passed like a bullet into his body. He uttered a long guttural sigh—there was a contraction—an extension—then his muscles relaxed, and he lay still.

Boldwood was seen through the smoke to be now again engaged with the gun. It was double-barrelled, and he had, meanwhile, in some way fastened his handkerchief to the trigger, and with his foot on the other end was in the act of turning the second barrel upon himself. Samway, his man, was the first to see this, and in the midst of the general horror darted up to him. Boldwood had already twitched the handkerchief, and the gun exploded a second time, sending its contents, by a timely blow from Samway, into the beam which crossed the ceiling.

"Well, it makes no difference," Boldwood gasped. "There is another way for me to die."

Then he broke from Samway, crossed the room to Bathsheba, and kissed her hand. He put on his hat, opened the door, and went into the darkness, nobody thinking of preventing him.

CHAPTER LIV.

After the Shock.

Boldwood passed into the high road, and turned in the direction of Casterbridge. Here he walked at an even, steady pace by Buck's Head, along the dead level beyond, mounted Casterbridge Hill, and between eleven and twelve o'clock descended into the town. The streets were nearly deserted now, and the waving lamp-flames only lighted up rows of grey shop-shutters, and strips of white paving upon which his step echoed as he passed along. He turned to the left, and halted before an archway of old brown brick, which was closed by an iron studded pair of doors. This was the entrance to the gaol, and over it a lamp was fixed, the light enabling the wretched traveller to find a bell-pull.

The small wicket at last opened, and a porter appeared. Boldwood stepped forward, and said something in a low tone, when, after a delay, another man came. Boldwood entered, and the door was closed behind him, and he walked the world no more.

Long before this time Weatherbury had been thoroughly aroused, and the wild deed which had terminated Boldwood's merrymaking became known to all. Of those out of the house Oak was one of the first to hear of the catastrophe, and when he entered the room, which was about five minutes after Boldwood's exit, the scene was terrible. All the female guests were huddled aghast against the walls like sheep in a storm, and the men were bewildered as to what to do. As for Bathsheba, she had changed. She was sitting on the floor beside the body of Troy, his head pillowed in her lap, where she had herself lifted it. With one hand she held her handkerchief to his breast and covered the wound, though scarcely a single drop of blood had flowed, and with the other she tightly clasped one of his. The household convulsion had made her herself again. The temporary coma had ceased, and activity had come with the necessity for it. Deeds of endurance, which seem ordinary in philosophy, are rare in conduct, and Bathsheba was astonishing all around her now, for her philosophy was her conduct, and she seldom thought practicable what she did not practise. She was of the stuff of which great men's mothers are made. She was indispensable to high generation, feared at tea parties, hated in shops, and loved at crises. Troy in his recumbent wife's lap formed now the sole spectacle in the middle of the spacious room.

"Gabriel," she said, automatically, when he entered, turning up a face of which only the well-known lines remained to tell him it was hers, all else in the picture having faded quite. "Ride to Casterbridge instantly

for a surgeon. It is, I believe, useless, but go. Mr. Boldwood has shot my husband."

Her statement of the fact in such quiet and simple words came with more force than a tragic declamation, and had somewhat the effect of setting the distorted images in each mind present into proper focus. Oak, almost before he had comprehended anything beyond the briefest abstract of the event, hurried out of the room, saddled a horse and rode away. Not till he had ridden more than a mile did it occur to him that he would have done better by sending some other man on this errand, remaining himself in the house. What had become of Boldwood? He should have been looked after. Was he mad—had there been a quarrel? Then how had Troy got here? Where had he come from? How did this remarkable reappearance come to pass when he was supposed to be at the bottom of the sea? Oak had in some slight measure been prepared for the presence of Troy by hearing a rumour of his return just before entering Boldwood's house; but before he had weighed that information, this fatal event had been superimposed. However, it was too late now to think of sending another messenger, and he rode on, in the excitement of these self-inquiries not discerning, when about three miles from Casterbridge, a square-figured pedestrian passing along under the dark hedge in the same direction as his own.

The miles necessary to be traversed, and other hindrances incidental to the lateness of the hour and the darkness of the night, delayed the arrival of Mr. Granthead, the surgeon; and more than three hours passed between the time at which the shot was fired and that of his entering the house. Oak was additionally detained in Casterbridge through having to give notice to the authorities of what had happened; and he then found that Boldwood had also entered the town, and delivered himself up.

In the meantime the surgeon, having hastened into the hall at Boldwood's, found it in darkness and quite deserted. He went on to the back of the house, where he discovered in the kitchen an old man, of whom he made inquiries.

"She's had him took away to her own house, sir," said his informant.

"Who has?" said the doctor.

"Mrs. Troy. 'A was quite dead, sir."

This was astonishing information. "She had no right to do that," said the doctor. "There will have to be an inquest, and she should have waited to know what to do."

"Yes, sir; it was hinted to her that she had better wait till the law was known. But she said law was nothing to her, and she wouldn't let her dear husband's corpse bide neglected for folks to stare at for all the crowners in England."

Mr. Granthead drove at once back again up the hill to Bathsheba's. The first person he met was poor Liddy, who seemed literally to have dwindled smaller in these few latter hours. "What has been done?" he said.

"I don't know, sir," said Liddy, with suspended breath. "My mistress has done it all."

"Where is she?"

"Upstairs with him, sir. When he was brought home and taken upstairs, she said she wanted no further help from the men. And then she called me, and made me fill the bath, and after that told me I had better go and lie down because I looked so ill. Then she locked herself into the room alone with him, and would not let a nurse come in, or anybody at all. But I thought I'd wait in the next room in case she should want me. I heard her moving about inside for more than an hour, but she only came out once, and that was for more candles, because her's had burnt down into the socket. She said we were to let her know when you or Mr. Thirdly came, sir."

Oak entered with the parson at this moment, and they all went upstairs together, preceded by Liddy Smallbury. Everything was silent as the grave when they paused on the landing. Liddy knocked, and Bathsheba's dress was heard rustling across the room: the key turned in the lock, and she opened the door. Her looks were calm and nearly rigid, like a slightly animated bust of Melpomene.

"Oh, Mr. Granthead, you have come at last," she murmured from her lips merely, and threw back the door. "Ah, and Mr. Thirdly. Well, all is done, and anybody in the world may see him now." She then passed by him, crossed the landing, and entered another room.

Looking into the chamber of death she had vacated they saw by the light of the candles which were on the drawers a tall straight shape lying at the further end of the bedroom, wrapped in white. Everything around was quite orderly. The doctor went in, and after a few minutes returned to the landing again, where Oak and the parson still waited.

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They took her away into a further room, and the medical attendance which had been useless in Troy's case was invaluable in Bathsheba's, who fell into a series of fainting-fits that had a serious aspect for a time. The sufferer was got to bed, and Oak, finding from the bulletins that nothing really dreadful was to be apprehended on her score, left the house. Liddy kept watch in Bathsheba's chamber, where she heard her mistress, moaning in whispers through the dull slow hours of that wretched night: "O, it is my fault—how can I live! O heaven, how can I live!"

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"I don't know, sir," said Liddy, with suspended breath. "My mistress has done it all."

"Where is she?"

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came from Casterbridge Gaol, whither he had been to wish Boldwood good-bye, and turned up a by-street to avoid the town. When past the last house he heard a hammering, and lifting his bowed head he looked back for a moment. Over the chimneys he could see the upper part of the gaol entrance, rich and glowing in the afternoon sun, and some moving figures were there. They were carpenters lifting a post into a vertical position within the parapet. He withdrew his eyes quickly, and hastened on.

It was dark when he reached home, and half the village was out to meet him.

"No tidings," Gabriel said, wearily. "And I'm afraid there's no hope. I've been with him more than two hours."

"Do ye think he *really* was out of his mind when he did it?" said Smallbury.

"I can't honestly say that I do," Oak replied. "However, that we can talk of another time. Has there been any change in mistress this afternoon?"

"None at all."

"Is she downstairs?"

"No. And getting on so nicely as she was too. She's but very little better now again than she was a-Christmas. She keeps on asking if you be come, and if there's news, till one's wearied out wi' answering her. Shall I go and say you've come?"

"No," said Oak. "There's a chance yet; but I couldn't stay in town any longer—after seeing him too. So Laban—Laban is here, isn't he?"

"Yes," said Tall.

"What I've arranged is, that you shall ride to town the last thing to-night; leave here about nine, and wait a while there, getting home about twelve. If nothing has been received by eleven to-night, they say there's no chance at all."

"I do so hope his life will be spared," said Liddy. "If it is not, she'll go out of her mind too. Poor thing; her sufferings have been dreadful; she deserves anybody's pity."

"Is she altered much?" said Coggan.

"If you haven't seen poor mistress since Christmas, you wouldn't know her," said Liddy. "Her eyes are so miserable that she's not the same woman. Only two years ago she was a romping girl, and now she's this!"

Laban departed as directed, and at eleven o'clock that night several of the villagers strolled along the road to Casterbridge and awaited his arrival—among them Oak, and nearly all the rest of Bathsheba's men. Gabriel's anxiety was great that Boldwood might be saved even though in his conscience he felt that he ought to die; for there had been qualities in the farmer which Oak loved. At last, when they all were weary, the tramp of a horse was heard in the distance:

> First dead, as if on turf it trode,
> Then, clattering, on the village road
> In other pace than forth he yode.

"We shall soon know now, one way or other," said Coggan, and they all stepped down from the bank on which they had been standing into the road, and the rider pranced into the midst of them.

"Is that you, Laban?" said Gabriel.

"Yes—'tis come. He's not to die. 'Tis confinement during her Majesty's pleasure."

"Hurrah!" said Coggan, with a swelling heart. "God's above the devil yet!"

CHAPTER LVI.

Beauty in loneliness: After all.

Bathsheba revived with the spring. The utter prostration that had followed the low fever from which she had suffered diminished perceptibly when all uncertainty upon every subject had come to an end.

But she remained alone now for the greater part of her time, and stayed in the house, or at furthest went into the garden. She shunned every one, even Liddy, and could be brought to make no confidences, and to ask for no sympathy.

As the summer drew on she passed more of her time in the open air, and began to examine into farming matters from sheer necessity, though she never rode out or personally superintended as at former times. One Friday evening in August she walked a little way along the road and entered the orchard for the first time since the sombre event of the preceding Christmas. None of the old colour had as yet come to her cheek, and its absolute paleness was heightened by the jet black of her dress till it appeared preternatural. When she reached the gate at the other end of the orchard, which opened nearly opposite to the churchyard, Bathsheba heard singing inside the church, and she knew that the singers were practising. She opened the gate, crossed the road and entered the graveyard, the high sills of the church windows effectually screening her from the eyes of those gathered within. Her stealthy walk was to the nook wherein Troy had worked at planting flowers upon Fanny Robin's grave, and she came to the marble tombstone.

A motion of satisfaction enlivened her face as she read the complete inscription. First came the words of Troy himself:

Erected by Francis Troy
In Memory of
Fanny Robin,
Who died October 9th, 18—,
Aged 20 years.

Underneath this was now inscribed in new letters:

In the same grave lie
The remains of the aforesaid
Francis Troy,
Who died December 24th, 18—,
Aged 26 years.

Whilst she stood and read and meditated the tones of the organ began again in the church, and she went with the same light step round to the porch and listened. The door was closed, and the choir was learning a new hymn. Bathsheba was stirred by emotions which latterly she had assumed to be altogether dead within her. The little attenuated voices of the children brought to her ear in distinct utterance the words they sang without thought or comprehension:

> "Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
> Lead Thou me on."

Bathsheba's feeling was always to some extent dependent upon her whim, as is the case with many other women. Something big came into her throat and an uprising to her eyes—and she thought that she would allow the imminent tears to flow if they wished. They did flow and plenteously, and one fell upon the stone bench beside her. Once that she had begun to cry for she hardly knew what, she could not leave off for crowding thoughts she knew too well. She would have given anything in the world to be, as those children were, unconcerned at the meaning of their words, because too innocent to feel the necessity for any such expression. All the impassioned scenes of her brief experience seemed to revive with added emotion at that moment, and those scenes which had been without emotion during enactment had emotion then. Yet grief came to her rather as a luxury than as the scourge of former times.

Owing to Bathsheba's face being buried in her hands she did not notice a form which came quietly into the porch, and on seeing her first moved as if to retreat, then paused and regarded her. Bathsheba did not raise her head for some time, and when she looked round her face was wet, and her eyes drowned and dim. "Mr. Oak," exclaimed she, disconcerted, "how long have you been here?"

"A few minutes, ma'am," said Oak, respectfully.

"Are you going in?" said Bathsheba; and there came from within the church as from a prompter:

> "I loved the garish day; and spite of fears
> Pride ruled my will: remember not past years."

"I was," said Gabriel. "I am one of the bass singers, you know. I have sung bass for several months."

"Indeed: I wasn't aware of that. I'll leave you then."

> "Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile,"

sang the children.

"Don't let me drive you away, mistress. I think I won't go in to-night."

"O no—you don't drive me away."

Then they stood in a state of some embarrassment, Bathsheba trying to wipe her dreadfully drenched and inflamed face without his noticing her. At length Oak said, "I've not seen you—I mean spoken to you—

since ever so long, have I." But he feared to bring distressing memories back, and interrupted himself with: "Were you going into church?"

"No," she said. "I came to see the tombstone privately—to see if they had cut the inscription as I wished. Mr. Oak, you needn't mind speaking to me, if you wish to, on the matter which is in both our minds at this moment."

"And have they done it as you wished?" said Oak.

"Yes. Come and see it, if you have not already."

So together they went and read the tomb. "Eight months ago!" Gabriel murmured when he saw the date. "It seems like yesterday to me."

"And to me as if it were years ago—long years, and I had been dead between. And now I am going home, Mr. Oak."

Oak walked after her. "I wanted to name a small matter to you as soon as I could," he said with hesitation. "Merely about business, and I think I may just mention it now, if you'll allow me."

"O yes, certainly."

"It is that I may soon have to give up the management of your farm, Mrs. Troy. The fact is, I am thinking of leaving England—not yet you know—next spring."

"Leaving England!" she said in surprise and genuine disappointment. "Why, Gabriel, what are you going to do that for?"

"Well, I've thought it best," Oak stammered out. "California is the spot I've had in my mind to try."

"But it is understood everywhere that you are going to take the Lower Farm on your own account."

"I've had the refusal o' it, 'tis true; but nothing is settled yet, and I have reasons for gieing up. I shall finish out my year there as manager for the trustees, but no more."

"And what shall I do without you? O Gabriel, I don't think you ought to go away! You've been with me so long—through bright times and dark times—such old friends as we are—that it seems unkind almost. I had fancied that if you leased the other farm as master, you might still give a helping look across at mine. And now going away!"

"I would have willingly."

"Yet now that I am more helpless than ever you go away."

"Yes, that's the ill fortune o' it," said Gabriel, in a distressed tone. "And it is because of that very helplessness that I feel bound to go. Good afternoon, ma'am." He concluded in evident anxiety to get away, and at once went out of the churchyard by a path she could follow on no pretence whatever.

Bathsheba went home, her mind occupied with a new trouble, which being rather harassing than deadly was calculated to do good by diverting her from the chronic gloom of her life. She was set thinking a great deal about Oak and of his wish to shun her; and there occurred to Bathsheba several incidents of her latter intercourse with him, which, trivial when singly viewed, amounted together to a perceptible disinclination for her

for a surgeon. It is, I believe, useless, but go. Mr. Boldwood has shot my husband."

Her statement of the fact in such quiet and simple words came with more force than a tragic declamation, and had somewhat the effect of setting the distorted images in each mind present into proper focus. Oak, almost before he had comprehended anything beyond the briefest abstract of the event, hurried out of the room, saddled a horse and rode away. Not till he had ridden more than a mile did it occur to him that he would have done better by sending some other man on this errand, remaining himself in the house. What had become of Boldwood? He should have been looked after. Was he mad—had there been a quarrel? Then how had Troy got here? Where had he come from? How did this remarkable reappearance come to pass when he was supposed to be at the bottom of the sea? Oak had in some slight measure been prepared for the presence of Troy by hearing a rumour of his return just before entering Boldwood's house; but before he had weighed that information, this fatal event had been superimposed. However, it was too late now to think of sending another messenger, and he rode on, in the excitement of these self-inquiries not discerning, when about three miles from Casterbridge, a square-figured pedestrian passing along under the dark hedge in the same direction as his own.

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CHAPTER LV.

THE MARCH FOLLOWING: "BATHSHEBA BOLDWOOD."

WE pass rapidly on into the month of March, to a breezy day without sunshine, frost or dew. On Yalbury Hill, about midway between Weatherbury and Casterbridge, where the turnpike road passes over the crest, a numerous concourse of people had gathered, the eyes of the greater number being frequently stretched afar in a northerly direction. The groups consisted of a throng of idlers, a party of javelin-men, and two trumpeters, and in the midst were carriages, one of which contained the high sheriff. With the idlers, many of whom had mounted to the top of a cutting formed for the road, were several Weatherbury men and boys—among others Poorgrass, Coggan, and Cain Ball.

At the end of half an hour a faint dust was seen in the expected quarter, and shortly after a travelling-carriage bringing one of the two judges on that circuit came up the hill and halted on the top. The judge changed carriages whilst a flourish was blown by the big-cheeked trumpeters, and a procession being formed of the vehicles and javelin-men, they all proceeded towards the town, excepting the Weatherbury men, who as soon as they had seen the judge move off returned home again to their work.

"Joseph, I seed you squeezing close to the carriage," said Coggan, as they walked. "Did ye notice my lord judge's face?"

"I did," said Poorgrass. "I looked hard at en, as if I would read his very soul; and there was mercy in his eyes—or to speak with the exact truth required of us at this solemn time, in the eye that was towards me."

"Well, I hope for the best," said Coggan, "though bad that must be. However, I shan't go to the trial, and I'd advise the rest of ye that baint wanted to bide away. 'Twill disturb his mind more than anything to see us there staring at him as if he were a show."

"The very thing I said this morning," observed Joseph. "'Justice is come to weigh him in the balance,' I said in my reflectious way, 'and if he's found wanting so be it unto him,' and a bystander said 'Hear, hear! A man who can talk like that ought to be heard.' But I don't like dwelling upon it, for my few words are my few words, and not much; though the speech of some men is rumoured abroad as though by nature formed for such."

"So 'tis, Joseph. And now, neighbours, as I said, every man bide at home."

The resolution was adhered to; and all waited anxiously for the news next day. Their suspense was diverted, however, by a discovery which was made in the afternoon, throwing more light on Boldwood's conduct and condition than any details which had preceded it.

That he had been from the time of Greenhill Fair until the fatal Christmas Eve in excited and unusual moods was known to those who had

been intimate with him; but nobody imagined that there had been shown unequivocal symptoms of the mental derangement which Bathsheba and Troy, alone of all others and at different times, had momentarily suspected. In a locked closet was now discovered an extraordinary collection of articles. There were several sets of ladies' dresses in the piece, of sundry expensive materials; silks and satins, poplins and velvets, all of colours which from Bathsheba's style of dress might have been judged to be her favourites. There were two muffs, sable and ermine. Above all there was a case of jewellery, containing four heavy gold bracelets and several lockets and rings, all of fine quality and manufacture. These things had been bought in Bath and other towns from time to time, and brought home by stealth. They were all carefully packed in paper, and each package was labelled "Bathsheba Boldwood," a date being subjoined six years in advance in every instance.

These somewhat pathetic evidences of a mind crazed with care and love were the subject of discourse in Warren's malthouse when Oak entered from Casterbridge with tidings of the sentence. He came in the afternoon, and his face, as the kiln glow shone upon it, told the tale sufficiently well. Boldwood, as everyone supposed he would do, had pleaded guilty, and had been sentenced to death.

The conviction that Boldwood had not been morally responsible for his later acts now became general. Facts elicited previous to the trial had pointed strongly in the same direction, but they had not been of sufficient weight to lead to an order for an examination into the state of Boldwood's mind. It was astonishing, now that a presumption of insanity was raised, how many collateral circumstances were remembered to which a condition of mental disease seemed to afford the only explanation —among others, the unprecedented neglect of his corn-stacks in the previous summer.

A petition was addressed to the Home Secretary, advancing the circumstances which appeared to justify a request for a reconsideration of the sentence. It was not "numerously signed" by the inhabitants of Casterbridge, as is usual in such cases, for Boldwood had never made many friends over the counter. The shops thought it very natural that a man who, by importing direct from the producer, had daringly set aside the first great principle of provincial existence, namely, that God made country villages to supply customers to country towns, should have confused ideas about the second, the Decalogue. The prompters were a few merciful men who had perhaps too feelingly considered the facts latterly unearthed, and the result was that evidence was taken which it was hoped might remove the crime, in a moral point of view, out of the category of wilful murder, and lead it to be regarded as a sheer outcome of madness.

The upshot of the petition was waited for in Weatherbury with solicitous interest. The execution had been fixed for eight o'clock on a Saturday morning about a fortnight after the sentence was passed, and up to Friday afternoon no answer had been received. At that time Gabriel

came from Casterbridge Gaol, whither he had been to wish Boldwood good-bye, and turned up a by-street to avoid the town. When past the last house he heard a hammering, and lifting his bowed head he looked back for a moment. Over the chimneys he could see the upper part of the gaol entrance, rich and glowing in the afternoon sun, and some moving figures were there. They were carpenters lifting a post into a vertical position within the parapet. He withdrew his eyes quickly, and hastened on.

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CHAPTER LVI.

Beauty in loneliness: After all.

Bathsheba revived with the spring. The utter prostration that had followed the low fever from which she had suffered diminished perceptibly when all uncertainty upon every subject had come to an end.

But she remained alone now for the greater part of her time, and stayed in the house, or at furthest went into the garden. She shunned every one, even Liddy, and could be brought to make no confidences, and to ask for no sympathy.

As the summer drew on she passed more of her time in the open air, and began to examine into farming matters from sheer necessity, though she never rode out or personally superintended as at former times. One Friday evening in August she walked a little way along the road and entered the orchard for the first time since the sombre event of the preceding Christmas. None of the old colour had as yet come to her cheek, and its absolute paleness was heightened by the jet black of her dress till it appeared preternatural. When she reached the gate at the other end of the orchard, which opened nearly opposite to the churchyard, Bathsheba heard singing inside the church, and she knew that the singers were practising. She opened the gate, crossed the road and entered the graveyard, the high sills of the church windows effectually screening her from the eyes of those gathered within. Her stealthy walk was to the nook wherein Troy had worked at planting flowers upon Fanny Robin's grave, and she came to the marble tombstone.

A motion of satisfaction enlivened her face as she read the complete inscription. First came the words of Troy himself:

Erected by Francis Troy
In Memory of
Fanny Robin,
Who died October 9th, 18—,
Aged 20 years.

Underneath this was now inscribed in new letters:

In the same grave lie
The remains of the aforesaid
Francis Troy,
Who died December 24th, 18—,
Aged 26 years.

Whilst she stood and read and meditated the tones of the organ began again in the church, and she went with the same light step round to the porch and listened. The door was closed, and the choir was learning a new hymn. Bathsheba was stirred by emotions which latterly she had assumed to be altogether dead within her. The little attenuated voices of the children brought to her ear in distinct utterance the words they sang without thought or comprehension:

> "Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
> Lead Thou me on."

Bathsheba's feeling was always to some extent dependent upon her whim, as is the case with many other women. Something big came into her throat and an uprising to her eyes—and she thought that she would allow the imminent tears to flow if they wished. They did flow and plenteously, and one fell upon the stone bench beside her. Once that she had begun to cry for she hardly knew what, she could not leave off for crowding thoughts she knew too well. She would have given anything in the world to be, as those children were, unconcerned at the meaning of their words, because too innocent to feel the necessity for any such expression. All the impassioned scenes of her brief experience seemed to revive with added emotion at that moment, and those scenes which had been without emotion during enactment had emotion then. Yet grief came to her rather as a luxury than as the scourge of former times.

Owing to Bathsheba's face being buried in her hands she did not notice a form which came quietly into the porch, and on seeing her first moved as if to retreat, then paused and regarded her. Bathsheba did not raise her head for some time, and when she looked round her face was wet, and her eyes drowned and dim. "Mr. Oak," exclaimed she, disconcerted, "how long have you been here?"

"A few minutes, ma'am," said Oak, respectfully.

"Are you going in?" said Bathsheba; and there came from within the church as from a prompter:

> "I loved the garish day; and spite of fears
> Pride ruled my will: remember not past years."

"I was," said Gabriel. "I am one of the bass singers, you know. I have sung bass for several months."

"Indeed: I wasn't aware of that. I'll leave you then."

> "Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile,"

sang the children.

"Don't let me drive you away, mistress. I think I won't go in to-night."

"O no—you don't drive me away."

Then they stood in a state of some embarrassment, Bathsheba trying to wipe her dreadfully drenched and inflamed face without his noticing her. At length Oak said, "I've not seen you—I mean spoken to you—

since ever so long, have I." But he feared to bring distressing memories back, and interrupted himself with: "Were you going into church?"

"No," she said. "I came to see the tombstone privately—to see if they had cut the inscription as I wished. Mr. Oak, you needn't mind speaking to me, if you wish to, on the matter which is in both our minds at this moment."

"And have they done it as you wished?" said Oak.

"Yes. Come and see it, if you have not already."

So together they went and read the tomb. "Eight months ago!" Gabriel murmured when he saw the date. "It seems like yesterday to me."

"And to me as if it were years ago—long years, and I had been dead between. And now I am going home, Mr. Oak."

Oak walked after her. "I wanted to name a small matter to you as soon as I could," he said with hesitation. "Merely about business, and I think I may just mention it now, if you'll allow me."

"O yes, certainly."

"It is that I may soon have to give up the management of your farm, Mrs. Troy. The fact is, I am thinking of leaving England—not yet you know—next spring."

"Leaving England!" she said in surprise and genuine disappointment. "Why, Gabriel, what are you going to do that for?"

"Well, I've thought it best," Oak stammered out. "California is the spot I've had in my mind to try."

"But it is understood everywhere that you are going to take the Lower Farm on your own account."

"I've had the refusal o' it, 'tis true; but nothing is settled yet, and I have reasons for gieing up. I shall finish out my year there as manager for the trustees, but no more."

"And what shall I do without you? O Gabriel, I don't think you ought to go away! You've been with me so long—through bright times and dark times—such old friends as we are—that it seems unkind almost. I had fancied that if you leased the other farm as master, you might still give a helping look across at mine. And now going away!"

"I would have willingly."

"Yet now that I am more helpless than ever you go away."

"Yes, that's the ill fortune o' it," said Gabriel, in a distressed tone. "And it is because of that very helplessness that I feel bound to go. Good afternoon, ma'am." He concluded in evident anxiety to get away, and at once went out of the churchyard by a path she could follow on no pretence whatever.

Bathsheba went home, her mind occupied with a new trouble, which being rather harassing than deadly was calculated to do good by diverting her from the chronic gloom of her life. She was set thinking a great deal about Oak and of his wish to shun her; and there occurred to Bathsheba several incidents of her latter intercourse with him, which, trivial when singly viewed, amounted together to a perceptible disinclination for her

society. It broke upon her at length as a great pain that her last old disciple was about to forsake her and flee. He who had believed in her and argued on her side when all the rest of the world was against her, had at last like the others become weary and neglectful of the old cause, and was leaving her to fight her battles alone.

Three weeks went on, and more evidence of his want of interest in her was forthcoming. She noticed that instead of entering the small parlour or office where the farm accounts were kept, and waiting, or leaving a memorandum as he had hitherto done during her seclusion, Oak never came at all when she was likely to be there, only entering at unseasonable hours when her presence in that part of the house was least to be expected. Whenever he wanted directions he sent a message, or note with neither heading nor signature, to which she was obliged to reply in the same off-hand style. Poor Bathsheba began to suffer now from the most torturing sting of all—a sensation that she was despised.

The autumn wore away gloomily enough amid these melancholy conjectures, and Christmas-day came, completing a year of her legal widowhood, and two years and a quarter of her life alone. On examining her heart it appeared beyond measure strange that the subject of which the season might have been supposed suggestive—the event in the hall at Boldwood's—was not agitating her at all; but instead, an agonising conviction that everybody abjured her—for what she could not tell—and that Oak was the ringleader of the recusants. Coming out of church that day she looked round in the hope that Oak, whose bass voice she had heard rolling out from the gallery overhead in a most unconcerned manner, might chance to linger in her path in the old way. There he was, as usual, coming up the path behind her; but on seeing Bathsheba turn, he looked aside, and as soon as he got beyond the gate, and there was the barest excuse for a divergence, he made one, and vanished.

The next morning brought the culminating stroke; she had been expecting it long. It was a formal notice by letter from him that he should not renew his engagement with her for the following Lady-day.

Bathsheba actually sat and cried over this letter most bitterly. She was aggrieved and wounded that the possession of hopeless love from Gabriel, which she had grown to regard as her inalienable right for life, should have been withdrawn just at his own pleasure in this way. She was bewildered too by the prospect of having to rely on her own resources again: it seemed to herself that she never could again acquire energy sufficient to go to market, barter, and sell. Since Troy's death Oak had attended all sales and fairs for her, transacting her business at the same time with his own. What should she do now! Her life was becoming a desolation.

So desolate was Bathsheba this evening, that in an absolute hunger for pity and sympathy, and miserable in that she appeared to have outlived the only true friendship she had ever owned, she put on her bonnet

and cloak and went down to Oak's house just after sunset, guided on her way by the pale primrose rays of a crescent moon a few days old.

A dancing fire-light shone from the window, but nobody was visible in the room. She tapped nervously, and then thought it doubtful if it were right for a single woman to call upon a bachelor who lived alone, although he was her manager and she might be supposed to call on business without any real impropriety. Gabriel opened the door, and the moon shone upon his forehead.

"Mr. Oak," said Bathsheba, faintly.

"Yes; I am Mr. Oak," said Gabriel. "Who have I the honour—— Oh! how stupid of me not to know you, mistress!"

"I shall not be your mistress much longer, shall I, Gabriel?" she said, in pathetic tones.

"Well, no. I suppose——But come in, ma'am. Oh—and I'll get a light," Oak replied, with some awkwardness.

"No; not on my account."

"It is so seldom that I get a lady visitor, that I'm afraid I haven't proper accommodation. Will you sit down, please? Here's a chair, and there's one, too. I am sorry that my chairs all have wood seats, and are rather hard, but I—was thinking of getting some new ones." Oak placed two or three for her.

"They are quite easy enough for me."

So down she sat, and down sat he, the fire dancing in their faces, and upon

> The few worn-out traps, all a-sheenen
> With long years of handlen,

that formed Oak's array of household possessions, which sent back a dancing reflection in reply. It was very odd to these two persons, who knew each other passing well, that the mere circumstance of their meeting in a new place and in a new way should make them so awkward and constrained. In the fields, or at her house, there had never been any embarrassment; but now that Oak had become the entertainer, their lives seemed to be moved back again to the days when they were strangers.

"You'll think it strange that I have come, but——"

"Oh, no; not at all!"

"But I thought—Gabriel, I have been uneasy in the belief that I have offended you, and that you are going away on that account. It grieved me very much, and I couldn't help coming."

"Offended me! As if you could do that, Bathsheba!"

"Haven't I?" she asked, gladly. "But what are you going away for else?"

"I am not going to emigrate, you know; I wasn't aware that you would wish me not to when I told ye, or I shouldn't ha' thought of doing it," he said, simply. "I have arranged for the Lower Farm, and shall have it in my own hands at Lady-day. You know I've had a share in it for some time. Still, that wouldn't prevent my attending to your

business as before, hadn't it been that things have been said about us."

"What?" said Bathsheba, in surprise. "Things said about you and me! What are they?"

"I cannot tell you."

"It would be wiser if you were to, I think. You have played the part of mentor to me many times, and I don't see why you should fear to do it now."

"It is nothing that you have done, this time. The top and tail o't is this—that I am sniffing about here, and waiting for poor Boldwood's farm, with the thought of getting you some day."

"Getting me! What does that mean?"

"Marrying o' ye, in plain British. You asked me to tell, so you musn't blame me."

Bathsheba did not look quite so alarmed as if a cannon had been discharged by her ear, which was what Oak had expected. "Marrying me! I didn't know it was that you meant," she said, quietly. "Such a thing as that is too absur—too soon—to think of, by far!"

"Yes; of course, it is too absurd. I don't desire any such thing; I should think that was visible enough, by this time. Surely, surely you be the last person in the world I think of marrying. It is too absurd, as you say."

"'Too s-s-soon' were the words I used."

"I must beg your pardon for correcting you, but you said, 'too absurd,' and so do I."

"I beg your pardon too!" she returned, with tears in her eyes. "'Too soon' was all I said. But it doesn't matter a bit—not at all—but I only said, 'too soon.' Indeed, I didn't, Mr. Oak; and you must believe me!"

Gabriel looked her long in the face, but the fire-light being faint there was not much to be seen. "Bathsheba," he said, tenderly and in surprise, and coming closer: "if I only knew one thing—whether you would allow me to love you and win you, and marry you after all—if I only knew that!"

"But you never will know," she murmured.

"Why?"

"Because you never ask."

"O—O!" said Gabriel, with a low laugh of joyousness. "My own dear——"

"You ought not to have sent me that harsh letter this morning," she interrupted. "It shows you didn't care a bit about me, and were ready to desert me like all the rest of them. It was very cruel of you, considering I was the first sweetheart that you ever had, and you were the first I ever had, and I shall not forget it!"

"Now, Bathsheba, was ever anybody so provoking?" he said, laughing. "You know it was purely that I, as an unmarried man,

carrying on a business for you as a very taking young woman, had a proper hard part to play—more particularly that people knew I had a sort of feeling for ye; and I fancied, from the way we were mentioned together, that it might injure your good name. Nobody knows the heat and fret I have been caused by it."

"And was that all?"

"All."

"O, how glad I am I came!" she exclaimed, thankfully, as she rose from her seat. "I have thought so much more of you since I fancied you did not want even to see me again. But I must be going now, or I shall be missed. Why, Gabriel," she said, with a slight laugh, as they went to the door, "it seems exactly as if I had come courting you—how dreadful."

"And quite right, too," said Oak. "I've danced at your skittish heels, my beautiful Bathsheba, for many a long mile, and many a long day, and it is hard to begrudge me this one visit."

He accompanied her up the hill, explaining to her the details of his forthcoming tenure of the Lower Farm. They spoke very little of their mutual feelings; pretty phrases and warm expressions being probably unnecessary between such tried friends. Theirs was that substantial affection which arises (if any arises at all) when the two who are thrown together begin first by knowing the rougher sides of each other's character, and not the best till further on, the romance growing up in the interstices of a mass of hard prosaic reality. This good-fellowship—*camaraderie*, usually occurring through similarity of pursuits, is unfortunately seldom superadded to love between the sexes, because men and women associate, not in their labours, but in their pleasures merely. Where, however, happy circumstance permits its development, the compounded feeling proves itself to be the only love which is strong as death—that love which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown, beside which the passion usually called by the name is evanescent as steam.

CHAPTER LVII.

A Foggy Night and Morning: Conclusion.

"The most private, secret, plainest wedding that it is possible to have."

Those had been Bathsheba's words to Oak one evening, some time after the event of the preceding chapter, and he meditated a full hour by the clock upon how to carry out her wishes to the letter.

"A licence—O yes, it must be a licence," he said to himself at last. "Very well, then; first, a licence."

On a dark night, a few days later, Oak came with mysterious steps from the surrogate's door, in Casterbridge. On the way home he heard a heavy tread in front of him, and, overtaking the man, found him to be

Coggan. They walked together into the village until they came to a little lane behind the church, leading down to the cottage of Laban Tall, who had lately been installed as clerk of the parish, and was yet in mortal terror at church on Sundays when he heard his lone voice among certain hard words of the Psalms whither no man ventured to follow him.

"Well, good-night, Coggan," said Oak, "I'm going down this way."

"Oh!" said Coggan, surprised; "what's going on to-night then, make so bold, Mr. Oak?"

It seemed rather ungenerous not to tell Coggan under the circumstances, for Coggan had been true as steel all through the time of Gabriel's unhappiness about Bathsheba, and Gabriel said, "You can keep a secret, Coggan?"

"You've proved me, and you know."

"Yes, I have, and I do know. Well then, mistress and I mean to get married to-morrow morning."

"Heaven's high tower! And yet I've thought of such a thing from time to time; true, I have. But keeping it so close! Well, there, 'tis no consarn of mine, and I wish ye joy o' her."

"Thank you, Coggan. But I assure ye that this great hush is not what I wished for at all, or what either of us would have wished if it hadn't been for certain things that would make a gay wedding seem hardly the thing. Bathsheba has a great wish that all the parish shall not be in church, looking at her—she's shy-like and nervous about it, in fact—so be doing this to humour her."

"Ay, I see: quite right, too, I suppose I must say. And you be now going down to the clerk."

"Yes; you may as well come with me."

"I am afeard your labour in keeping it close will be throwed away," said Coggan as they walked along. "Labe Tall's old woman will horn it all over parish in half an hour."

"So she will, upon my life; I never thought of that," said Oak, pausing. "Yet I must tell him to-night, I suppose, for he's working so far off, and leaves early.

"I'll tell ye how we could tackle her," said Coggan. "I'll knock and ask to speak to Laban outside the door, you standing in the background. Then he'll come out, and you can tell yer tale. She'll never guess what I want en for; and I'll make up a few words about the farm-work, as a blind."

This scheme was considered feasible; and Coggan advanced boldly, and rapped at Mrs. Tall's door. Mrs. Tall herself opened it.

"I wanted to have a word with Laban."

"He's not at home, and won't be this side of eleven o'clock. He've been forced to go to over Yalbury since shutting out work. I shall do quite as well."

"I hardly think you will. Stop a moment." And Coggan stepped round the corner of the porch to consult Oak.

"Who's t'other man, then?" said Mrs. Tall.

"Only a friend," said Coggan.

"Say he's wanted to meet mistress near church-hatch to-morrow morning at ten," said Oak, in a whisper. "That he must come without fail, and wear his best clothes."

"The clothes will floor us as safe as houses!" said Coggan.

"It can't be helped," said Oak. "Tell her."

So Coggan delivered the message. "Mind, wet or dry, blow or snow, he must come," added Jan. "'Tis very particular, indeed. The fact is 'tis to witness her sign some law-work about taking shares wi' another farmer for a long span o' years. There, that's what 'tis, and now I've told ye, mother Tall, in a way I shouldn't ha' done if I hadn't loved ye so hopeless well."

Coggan retired before she could ask any further; and then they called at the vicar's in a way which excited no curiosity at all. Then Gabriel went home, and prepared for the morrow.

"Liddy," said Bathsheba, on going to bed that night, "I want you to call me at seven o'clock to-morrow, in case I shouldn't wake."

"But you always do wake afore then, ma'am."

"Yes, but I have something important to do, which I'll tell you of when the time comes, and it's best to make sure."

Bathsheba, however, awoke voluntarily at four, nor could she by any contrivance get to sleep again. About six, being quite positive that her watch had stopped during the night, she could wait no longer. She went and tapped at Liddy's door, and after some labour awoke her.

"But I thought it was I who had to call you?" said the bewildered Liddy. "And it isn't six yet."

"Indeed it is; how can you tell such a story, Liddy? I know it must be ever so much past seven. Come to my room as soon as you can; I want you to give my hair a good brushing."

When Liddy came to Bathsheba's room her mistress was already waiting. Liddy could not understand this extraordinary promptness. "Whatever *is* going on, ma'am?" she said.

"Well, I'll tell you," said Bathsheba, with a mischievous smile in her bright eyes. "Farmer Oak is coming here to dine with me to-day!"

"Farmer Oak—and nobody else?—you two alone?"

"Yes."

"But is it safe, ma'am?" said her companion, dubiously. "A woman's good name is such a perishable article that——"

Bathsheba laughed with a flushed cheek, and whispered in Liddy's ear, although there was nobody present. Then Liddy stared and exclaimed, "Souls alive, what news! It makes my heart go quite bumpity-bump!"

"It makes mine rather furious, too," said Bathsheba. "However, there's no getting out of it now."

It was a damp disagreeable morning. Nevertheless, at twenty minutes to ten o'clock, Oak came out of his house, and

> Went up the hill side
> With that sort of stride
> A man puts out when walking in search of a bride,

and knocked at Bathsheba's door. Ten minutes later two large umbrellas might have been seen moving from the same door, and through the mist along the road to the church. The distance was not more than a hundred yards, and these two sensible persons deemed it unnecessary to drive. An observer must have been very close indeed to discover that the forms under the umbrellas were those of Oak and Bathsheba, arm-in-arm for the first time in their lives, Oak in a great coat extending to his knees, and Bathsheba in a cloak that reached her clogs. Yet though so plainly dressed, there was a certain rejuvenated appearance about her :—

> As though a rose should shut and be a bud again.

Repose had again incarnadined her cheeks; and having, at Gabriel's request, arranged her hair this morning as she had worn it years ago on Norcombe Hill, she seemed in his eyes remarkably like the girl of that fascinating dream, which, considering that she was now only three- or four-and-twenty, was perhaps not very wonderful. In the church were Tall, Liddy, and the parson, and in a remarkably short space of time the deed was done.

The two sat down very quietly to tea in Bathsheba's parlour in the evening of the same day, for it had been arranged that Farmer Oak should go there to live, since he had as yet neither money, house, nor furniture worthy of the name, though he was on a sure way towards them, whilst Bathsheba was, comparatively, in a plethora of all three. Just as Bathsheba was pouring out a cup of tea, their ears were greeted by the firing of a cannon, followed by what seemed like a tremendous blowing of trumpets, in the front of the house.

"There!" said Oak, laughing. "I knew those fellows were up to something, by the look of their faces."

Oak took up the light and went into the porch, followed by Bathsheba with a shawl over her head. The rays fell upon a group of male figures gathered upon the gravel in front, who, when they saw the newly-married couple in the porch, set up a loud "Hurrah!" and at the same moment bang again went the cannon in the background, followed by a hideous clang of music from a drum, tambourine, clarionet, serpent, hautboy, tenor-viol, and double-bass—the only remaining relics of the true and original Weatherbury band—venerable worm-eaten instruments, which had celebrated in their own persons the victories of Marlborough, under the fingers of the forefathers of those who played them now. The performers came forward, and marched up to the front.

"Those bright boys Mark Clark and Jan are at the bottom of all

this," said Oak. "Come in, souls, and have something to eat and drink wi' me and my wife."

"Not to-night," said Mr. Clark, with evident self-denial. "Thank ye all the same; but we'll call at a more seemly time. However, we couldn't think of letting the day pass without a note of admiration of some sort. If ye could send a drop of som'at down to Warren's, why so it is. Here's long life and happiness to neighbour Oak and his comely bride!"

"Thank ye; thank ye all," said Gabriel. "A bit and a drop shall be sent to Warren's for ye at once. I had a thought that we might very likely get a salute of some sort from our old friends, and I was saying so to my wife but now."

"Faith," said Coggan in a critical tone, turning to his companions: "The man hev learnt to say 'my wife' in a wonderful naterel way, considering how very youthful he is in wedlock as yet—hey, neighbours all?"

"I never heerd a skilful old married feller of twenty years' standing pipe 'my wife' in a more used note than 'a did," said Jacob Smallbury. "It might have been a little more true to nater if 't had been a little chillier, but that wasn't to be expected just now."

"That improvement will come with time," said Jan, twirling his eye.

Then Oak laughed, and Bathsheba smiled (for she never laughed readily now), and their friends turned to go.

"Yes; I suppose that's the size o't," said Joseph Poorgrass, with a cheerful sigh as they moved away; "and I wish him joy o' her; though I were once or twice upon saying to-day with holy Hosea, in my scripture manner which is my second nature, 'Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.' But since 'tis as 'tis, why, it might have been worse, and I feel my thanks accordingly."

Secret Affinities:

A PANTHEISTIC FANTASY, FROM THE FRENCH OF THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

Deep in the vanished time, two statues white,
  On an old temple's front, against blue gleams
Of an Athenian sky, instinct with light,
  Blended their marble dreams.

In the same shell imbedded (crystal tears
  Of the sad sea mourning her Venus flown),
Two pearls of loneliest ocean, through long years,
  Kept whispering words unknown.

In the fresh pleasaunce, by Grenada's river,
  Close to the low-voiced fountain's silver showers,
Two roses, from Boabdil's garden, ever
  Mingled their murmuring flowers.

Upon the domes of Venice, in a nest
  Where love from age to age has had his day,
Two white doves, with their feet of pink, found rest
  Through the soft month of May.

Dove, rose, pearl, marble, into ruin dim
  Alike dissolve themselves, alike decay;
Pearls melt, flowers wither, marble shapes dislimn,
  And bright birds float away.

Each element, once free, flies back to feed
  The unfathomable Life-dust, yearning dumb,
Whence God's all-shaping hands in silence knead
  Each form that is to come.

By slow, slow change, to white and tender flesh
  The marble softens down its flawless grain;
The rose, in lips as sweet and red and fresh,
  Refigured, blooms again.

The doves once more murmur and coo beneath
  The hearts of two young lovers, when they meet;
The pearls renew themselves, and flash as teeth
  Through smiles divinely sweet.

Hence sympathetic emanations flow,
  And with soft tyranny the heart controul;
Touched by them, kindred spirits learn to know
  Their sisterhood of soul.

Obedient to the hint some fragrance sends,
  Some colour, or some ray with mystic power,
Atom to atom never swerving tends,
  As the bee seeks her flower.

Of moonlight visions round the temple shed,
  Of lives linked in the sea, a memory wakes,
Of flower-talk flushing through the petals red
  Where the bright fountain breaks.

Kisses, and wings that shivered to the kiss,
  On golden domes afar, come back to rain
Sweet influence; Faithful to remembered bliss,
  The old love stirs again.

Forgotten presences shine forth, the past
  Is for the visionary eye unsealed;
The breathing flower, in crimson lips recast,
  Lives, to herself revealed.

Where the laugh plays a glittering mouth within
  The pearl reclaims her lustre softly bright;
The marble throbs, fused in a maiden skin
  As fresh, and pure, and white.

Under some low and gentle voice the dove
  Has found an echo of her tender moan;
Resistance grows impossible, and love
  Springs up from the unknown.

Oh! thou whom burning, trembling, I adore,
  What shrine, what sea, what dome, what rose-tree bower,
Saw us, as mingling marble, joined of yore,
  As pearl, or bird, or flower?

FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

Heywood's Dramatic Works.

It is related of Hardi, the French Lope de Vega, that he wrote no fewer than eight hundred dramatic pieces between the years 1600 and 1637. So far as connectedness or consecutiveness of incident is concerned, it is true that there was not the shadow of any reasonable attempt in these plays, and a veritable hodge-podge is the net result of Hardi's labours. But that a man should be able even to plan, much less to execute, such a quantity of work is a most fearful development of intellectual fertility. Had Mr. Carlyle chanced to be his contemporary, the spectacle would have been one of novel interest—that of the philosopher thundering forth his philosophy of Silence, and that of the dramatist showering, with a pertinacity more bewildering than agreeable, his dramas upon the world. From this old French author to Thomas Heywood is a long step as regards power of productiveness, but it is no mean distinction for the latter to possess that he either composed or took part in the production of two hundred and twenty dramatic pieces. Even this we should regard as an inordinate share of the *cacoethes scribendi* to be monopolised by one man. Silence is as manifestly the general duty of certain individuals as speech is of others; but the difficulty always lies in persuading to his duty the man whom Providence has destined to be taciturn. Each individual can in this respect generally read his neighbour's duty more clearly than his own. As regards Heywood, it would have been just as well had many of those effusions which have testified to the prolific character of his brain remained unwritten; they are only so many additions to the lumber of the ages; but, on the contrary, several dramas which have been preserved as associated with his name, bear upon them so unmistakably the stamp of genius that, on the whole, we are not sorry even to wade through the deep waters of mediocrity in search of the veritable jewel. No poet has always been his own equal; and if great Homer nods, the lesser brethren of his art may well be pardoned when they sometimes exhibit utter and most undoubted somnolency of talent. Though it is no argument in favour of unequal composition, yet a poet who should charge every line of his works with some weighty aphorism, would, in the end, become a very unpopular individual, and be largely "taken as read."

But while mentioning the number of effusions of a distinctly dramatic character of which Heywood was the writer, we have by no means exhausted the catalogue of his creations. Poems, histories, and prose dissertations innumerable he also threw off, and in these things testified that his spirit knew no fear in treading either the loftiest or the

meanest ground. From the creation of the World, or from the Spanish Armada, he could step down to chronicle the doings of a Lancashire witch; his genius exercised itself in depicting the building of Noah's Ark and the building of the last new man-of-war—and, as if to adapt his work to those variable accretions of timber, we further learn that the sizes of his volumes ranged from "stately folio down to modest duodecimo." Many of his folios, together with almost the whole facts of his personal history, lie buried in the deepest oblivion. It is beyond our power to recover them to the world's recollection; nor are we sure that we desire to do so. One thing is clear: too little is known of him to bias us one way or the other in arriving at an estimate upon his works. We can consider him with the utmost freedom, no man essaying to make us afraid. Some attempts have been made to construct a biography of Heywood, but neither the time of his birth or his death is known, and it is only incidentally gathered from one of his poems that he was a native of Lincolnshire. This, and the knowledge that he was a fellow of Peter House, Cambridge, appear to be the only facts that would justify positive assertion regarding him.

From the excellent edition of his plays recently issued, however,* there does appear to be some clue as to dates of production of many of his pieces. Fragile, indeed, is the link sought to be established between Heywood and "a respectable"—that is, a rather exalted—rank in society, from the fact that the dramatist refers in mellifluous terms to two gentlemen who for years honoured him with their friendship. Yet we will not begrudge the biographer what consolation can be derived from his assumption; he hath our discreet forbearance, for we can neither affirm nor contradict. One thing is very probable, viz. that Heywood led at one period the jolly, devil-may-care life which distinguished many of the old dramatists, and we discover that in the year 1598 he was regularly engaged by Henslowe as a player and a sharer in the Lord Admiral's company. He was afterwards in the service of the wife of James I., for after leaving the Lord Admiral's company, on James's accession, he became one of the theatrical servants of the Earl of Worcester, who transferred him to Queen Anne as one would transfer a lap-dog to a friend. He himself says, in dedicating a book to Lord Worcester, "I was, my Lord, your creature; and, amongst other your servants, you bestowed me upon the excellent Princess Q. Anne, ... but by her lamented death your gift is returned again into your hands." The first plays of Heywood's which were printed were the historical series, issued without his name at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is supposed that the first part of his play on Queen Elizabeth must have been printed from notes taken in the theatre, that being the only way to account for its corrupt text. A much more complete and perfect edition was published in 1633, and that is the version reprinted. Two of the

* *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood*, now first collected. In six volumes. London: John Pearson. 1874.

plays for which the dramatist most justly deserves remembrance—*A Woman Killed with Kindness* and *The Fair Maid of the Exchange*—were printed in 1607; and the following interesting entry respecting the former appears in Henslowe's Diary, as printed by the Shakspeare Society during their republication of some of Heywood's works—"Paid, at the appointment of the company, the 6th of March, 1602, unto Thomas Heywood, in full payment for his play, called *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, the sum of 3*l*." The precision with which this fact is noted is in striking contrast with the manner in which Heywood himself looked after the business of correcting, verifying, and issuing his plays. His rapidity of production was undoubted, but for some reason or other he does not appear to have been sufficiently careful in clothing his intellectual offspring, and presenting them successively to the world.

Omitting chronological notice of many of the plays of this author, which is perfectly immaterial to our purpose, we pass on to note that Heywood wrote all the known pageants for Lord Mayor's Day between 1630 and 1640, in which latter year they ceased to be exhibited, and were not again renewed for some years. Several of those which the dramatist composed have been preserved and reprinted. The two parts of the drama, *The Fair Maid of the West*, were in existence, and had been performed, many years before they were printed. Only two plays were written by Heywood in collaboration, and of these the better known one of *The Lancashire Witches* was produced in conjunction with Richard Brome (who was once servant to Ben Jonson), and published in 1634. The latest composition of the dramatist which bears a date was published in 1641; but it is inferred that he must have been living in 1648, when the following lines were issued in *A Satire against Separatists*:—

> So may rare pageants grace the Lord Mayor's show,
> And none find out they are idols too;
> So may you come to sleep in fur at last,
> And some Smectymnuan, when your days are past,
> Your funeral sermon of six hours rehearse,
> And Heywood sing your acts in lofty verse.

Some contemporary or other would here appear to have cherished an exalted opinion of his talents. Heywood indulged the portentous idea, at one period of his life, of writing the lives of the poets of all ages and of all nations—a task almost as stupendous as any hitherto undertaken by mortal. As to its usefulness, save as a dry book of reference, we may entertain considerable doubt; and fortunately, from some circumstance or another, the projected work was never completed. The world can very well do without it; for, at the most, a selection even of our own poets is all that we should desire to receive. Nor can we coincide with the biographer that Heywood's treatment of his tuneful brethren must necessarily have been of a high order. At any rate, there is no positive evidence to prove that such would have been the case. His place as a dramatist is

no mean one, and it is secure; with that distinction he may very well rest content. It is a mistake for any man of original genius to turn himself into an encyclopedist.

Upon the manner in which this edition of Heywood's works has been edited we do not propose to say much. It is neither better nor worse than many similar compilations; but the publisher's part is excellently performed. This is indubitably a point in which previous works have been excelled. Into the vexed question whether the anonymous editor has made too free with the notes of this and that commentator, without rendering sufficient acknowledgment, it would be useless to inquire at length. The plays are not to illustrate the notes, but the notes the plays. It would have been better, perhaps, if the editor had frankly said where the bulk of his notes came from, and thus disarmed criticism; but after all the one great fact is that we get an admirable edition of Heywood's works, and one much more complete than any which has hitherto been published. The names of Mr. J. P. Collier and Mr. Barron Field are well known in connection with the annotation of old English dramatists, and both have done something with Heywood. Into their labours Mr. Pearson's editor has entered without, perhaps, that hearty candour and the generous thanks which should distinguish a man who dines sumptuously off his friend's table. In one respect the editor is to be praised; for, having few notes of his own to give us, he has the wisdom not to interfere seriously with those which he has borrowed. On the whole, however, his work has not been badly executed; in the memoir he has had to bend himself to the task of making bricks without straw, and his struggle to achieve this feat is by no means contemptible.

Charles Lamb, who was no indifferent judge of the relative merits of the old dramatists—for his study of them was close and intimate—observed of Heywood, "If I were to be consulted as to a reprint of our old English dramatists, I should advise to begin with the collected plays of Heywood. He was a fellow-actor and fellow-dramatist with Shakspeare. He possessed not the imagination of the latter, but in all those qualities which gained for Shakspeare the attribute of *gentle* he was not inferior to him. Generosity, courtesy, temperance in the depths of passion; sweetness, in a word, and gentleness; Christianism, and true hearty Anglicism of feelings shaping that Christianism, shine throughout his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakspeare; but only more conspicuous inasmuch as in Heywood these qualities are primary, in the other subordinate to poetry. Heywood should be known to his countrymen as he deserves. His plots are almost invariably English." This eulogy was equalled by one from Hazlitt upon Heywood, only that the latter was more discriminative in his selection of the special qualities of the dramatist. Nor are these the only authorities who have testified to his powers; whether the reader will agree with the high estimates formed after a careful reading of Heywood is, to our mind, rather doubtful. The criticism which described him as "a prose Shakspeare"

is much nearer the truth than the high-flown compliments emanating from some quarters. His writing is flat and insipid when compared with that of our greatest poet, though it is now and then charged with the real elements of pathos and emotion.

Edward IV. is a play in two parts, which, taken together, give a total of nearly two hundred pages. Many of the scenes in this somewhat wearisome drama might have been excised with advantage, but others again are so excellent as to be worthy of the best dramatists. Occasionally there are touches like the following, when the King is saying good-bye to the Tanner of Tamworth :—

King. Farewell, John Hobs, the honest true tanner!
I see plain men, by observation
Of things that alter in the change of times,
Do gather knowledge ; and the meanest life,
Proportioned with content sufficiency,
Is merrier than the mighty state of kings.

The dialogue between the King in disguise and Jane Shore is higher than Heywood's general merit, and we extract from it a few lines to afford some idea of the style :—

King. Thou mayst convict me, beauty's pride, of boldness,
That I intrude like an unbidden guest ;
But Love being guide, my fault will seem the less.
Jane. Most welcome to your subject's homely roof!
The foot, my sovereign, seldom doth offence,
Unless the heart some other hurt intend.
King. The most thou seest is hurt unto myself ;
How for thy sake is majesty disrobed!
Riches made poor, and dignity brought low,
Only that thou mightst our affection know!
Jane. The more the pity that, within the sky,
The sun, that should all other vapours dry,
And guide the world with his most glorious light,
Is muffled up himself in wilful night.
King. The want of thee, fair Cynthia, is the cause;
Spread thou thy silver brightness in the air,
And straight the gladsome morning will appear.

The comic element in this drama is also well sustained, while as a piece of character-drawing Matthew Shore is deserving of high praise. But unquestionably the best point in the whole thing is the scene between Jane Shore and the Queen, whose place she had supplanted in the King's affections. The changes of feeling which agitate the bosom of the wronged woman are strongly depicted, as well as the influence which the beautiful city madam ultimately has upon her. The second part of the play is not so noticeable as the first, and the character of Richard is a conception without either strength or dignity. In attempting to draw a villain the author seems to have lost his power, and to have failed for want of that calmness in which lies the true power of the dramatic genius. The

soliloquy of Tyrrell immediately before the murder of the young princes in the Tower is touched with the spirit of pathos, but it is a height of excellence very seldom attained. Here are the lines in question, in which Tyrrell is supposed to address the princes as they go out :—

> Go, lay ye down, but never more to rise ;
> I have put my hand into the foulest murder
> That ever was committed since the world.
> The very senseless stones here in the walls
> Break out in tears but to behold the fact.
> Methinks the bodies lying dead in graves
> Should rise and cry against us. O hark ! (*a noise within*) hark !
> The mandrake's shrieks are music to their cries ;
> The very night is frighted, and the stars
> Do drop like torches to behold this deed ;
> The very centre of the earth doth shake ;
> Methinks the tower should rent down from the top
> To let the heaven look on this monstrous deed.

The climax of the tragedy is well regarded and naturally led up to, and probably we do Heywood's talent as a dramatist some injustice when we complain of roughness of execution. He himself admitted the lack of a strict supervision of his works, and doubtless he could have imparted to them a more finished air than they now possess had he been thus minded. The play *If you know not Me, you know Nobody* is one of the most widely familiar of those written by Heywood, and deals with the troubles of Queen Elizabeth. It has in it all the materials for a most interesting drama, but the usual carelessness of the author, and his too frequent indifference to the rules of art, have left it rather a suggestion of what might be done than an accomplishment of the task. For the most part it is a tangled mass of scenes, without coherency, and must have proved tedious acting if produced in its entirety. The first part deals with the persecution by Mary of Elizabeth, and ends with the latter's ascension of the throne. In the second, the building of the Royal Exchange and the famous victory over the Spanish Armada are the substance of the play. With such themes one would imagine that the author might produce the best work that was in him ; but all that portion of the drama referring to the opening and dedication of the Royal Exchange is lacking in boldness of idea and expression. The proceedings seem much more ordinary than would be the case were they reported by the newspapers of the present day. The whole pageant is of a tawdry and ineffective description, and we greatly wonder at Heywood venturing to publish the play in so incomplete and inadequate a condition. The plea that he did it in self-defence because there had been an unauthorised publication of the drama is not sufficient justification for the raw material which he has so clumsily thrown together. One speech, however, delivered by Queen Elizabeth towards the close of the last act redeems the author from a multitude of minor sins. It has the true martial ring in it, and is supposed to have

been delivered by the Queen when, in full armour, she unfolded her standard at Tilbury. We cannot do better than reproduce it:—

Queen. Be this, then, styled our camp at Tilbury,
And the first place we have been seen in arms,
Or thus accoutred; here we fix our foot,
Not to stir back, were we sure here t'encounter,
With all the Spanish vengeance threaten'd us,
Came it in fire and thunder. Know, my subjects,
Your Queen hath now put on a masculine spirit,
To tell the bold and daring what they are,
Or what they ought to be; and such as faint,
Teach them, by my example, fortitude.
Nor let the best prov'd soldier here disdain
A woman should conduct a host of men,
To their disgrace or want of precedent.
Have you not read of brave Zenobia,
An Eastern queen, who fac'd the Roman legions,
Even in their pride and height of potency,
And in the field encountered personally
Aurelianus Cæsar? Think in me
Her spirit survives, Queen of this Western isle,
To make the scorn'd name of Elizabeth
As frightful and as terrible to Spain
As was Zenobia's to the state of Rome.
O I could wish them landed, and in view,
To bid them instant battle ere march farther
Into England. This is my vow, my rest;
I'll pave their way with this my virgin breast.

So much for this heroic defence of woman's right to be, do, and appear in every respect as she thinks best.

The Fair Maid of the Exchange is a play of middle-class life which turns on a semi-repulsive incident. Phillis, the maid in question, is apprenticed to a sempstress in the Exchange, and one night, in taking home some work to the east end of London, accompanied by a servant, she is beset by two scapegraces of the town, from whom she is rescued by the Cripple and one Frank Goulding. Phillis is so grateful for this act that she falls in love with the Cripple, and herein the author has spoilt his story, for he shows no reasonable ground why she should have preferred this unsightly youth to the more comely Frank, who rendered her equal service. Goulding, who had scorned love hitherto, becomes desperately enamoured of Phillis, which is also the case, by-the-by, with his two elder brothers. After a good deal of plotting and counter-plotting, and "sighing like furnace," Frank wins the day, aided by the Cripple. The reader is chagrined at the Fair Maid's inconstancy; for he fully expected that when once she had declared her choice in favour of the Cripple she would have kept to her extraordinary preference. He is doubly disappointed—first, at her want of taste; secondly, at her fickleness in exhibiting such readiness in the transference of her affections. There are other contradictory things in the play, which, being intended as a

comedy of intrigue, is supposed to be elastic under the hands of the playwright. The Cripple is not without humour, and gives vent to much stinging satire upon contemporary manners. In the mouth of Goulding is put an excellent description of love, when amongst other things he decides that love is "a substance less divine than is the soul, yet more than any other power in man." But by far the best thing in the play is the song to Phillis, which is quite worthy of many of the fine old lyric poets, and shows that Heywood was by no means destitute of music. There are many poetic passages to be found here and there, especially in the scene where the verses alluded to come in. Two of these light and exquisite stanzas run as follows :—

Ye little birds, that sit and sing
  Amidst the shady valleys,
And see how Phillis sweetly walks
  Within her garden alleys,
Go, pretty birds, about her bower ;
Sing, pretty birds, she may not lour.
Ah me ! methinks I see her frown.
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

* * * *

O fly ! make haste ! See ! see ! she falls
  Into a pretty slumber ;
Sing round about her rosy bed,
  That waking she may wonder.
Say to her 't is her lover true,
That sendeth love to you, to you :
And when you hear her kind reply,
Return with pleasant warblings.

At once one of the most painful and highly meritorious of Heywood's plays is *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Had he always written upon the level we behold here there could be little question that the author would have taken his place amongst the front rank of dramatists. It is impossible to read it and not be touched by a quick sympathy, for it has the power of engrossing the feelings in a very remarkable degree. Natural and yet rich in utterance, it is just one of those plays which justify the preservation of the writer's works in a permanent form. As should be the case with true dramatic writing, we are the subjects of the passion depicted; it is our master, and leads us on. The drama is charged with the tragic element. The infidelity of Mrs. Frankford is a circumstance for which we are not quite prepared, perhaps, but the plot of the villain has been well laid and warily carried out. The story is to this effect: We are introduced to the house of one Mr. Frankford, a gentleman of fortune in the country, who is married to a very beautiful lady. They receive into their circle a person of fascinating exterior, one Mr. Wendoll, who has rather come down in the world. Generous to a degree, Frankford will not at first believe the assurances of his faithful servant Nicholas that his wife has played him false with Wendoll.

However, the latter, who has been trusted to the uttermost by his benefactor, basely betrays his confidence. Frankford, discovering beyond doubt that his wife is really guilty, sends her away from him, to live upon a distant estate of his. Here she suffers great agony of mind, and finally prays for a reconciliation with her husband. Being upon her death-bed, Frankford consents to the interview; he forgives her, and she dies, "killed with kindness." Whether the moral with which the play concludes be such as we can approve or no matters little as regards our admiration for the workmanship. There are several scenes in the course of the drama instinct with deep feeling; notably one, where, at a game of cards, Frankford endeavours to test his wife by a conversation full of *double-entendre*, and again where the wretched husband discovers beyond doubt that he has been betrayed. Heywood has never surpassed these scenes, and rarely equalled them. The entire play is a story of real life most dramatically recorded. The contradictory elements in Mrs. Frankford's character are such as we seldom meet with in actual experience, but there may be warrant for the existence of such women. Possibly there are those who can change from the most doting of wives to the lightest of wantons, as she did, but they are scarcely the women who might be expected to break their hearts over the defection. Still, this is a matter in which the author is justified in taking his own view, though it may be in opposition to the general consciousness. The character of Jane Shore is much more perfectly drawn than Mrs. Frankford in this respect, for whereas the latter surrenders at discretion, the former makes a long resistance. Considering the period in which he wrote, Heywood has treated a delicate subject with great care, and a comparative absence of grossness. *The Four Prentices of London* is a comedy which seems somewhat to have puzzled the critics. One has represented it as a satire upon knight-errantry, whilst another believes that it was written in all seriousness. The latter hypothesis it is impossible to believe, as the comedy is too full of absurdities; touching the former, there is no evidence that such was Heywood's intention. The truth appears to be that he was anxious to write an amusing comedy for the benefit of "the honest and high-spirited prentices, the readers," with whom, for some reason or other, he was anxious to stand in good esteem. But whatever may have been the author's object, the less we say of his pro uction the better; it in no way enhances his fame. As for the knightly apprentices, their deeds only excite in us the sensation of ridicule. We cannot linger over *The Fair Maid of the West*, notwithstanding the fact that the heroine is more individualised than can be said of any other persons in the play, and that we are able to take some amount of interest in her adventures. Altogether this drama also is not worthy of the author's powers, and we must dispute the dictum that considerable skill and ingenuity have been displayed in managing and evolving the plot. One fact alone destroys its sequence, viz. that in one of the acts we are pitchforked without any warning at all from Cornwall to Morocco, and from Morocco to the

Azores. There is a good deal of action in the play—in fact, rather too much, as may be gathered from the violent display of locomotion just mentioned. Occasionally the author's Pegasus gives us a few good lines of poetry too, but the jade is really broken-winded.

A ponderous volume was written by Heywood of four plays constructed upon the heathen mythologies. The dramas are entitled respectively the *Golden Age*, the *Silver*, the *Brazen*, and the two parts of the *Iron Age*. This work of considerable magnitude had already been rendered superfluous by the labours of more illustrious men, and Heywood suffers enormously when compared with Homer and Ovid. His metals, in truth, cannot be called precious metals in the literary sense. Much of these plays consists of but a disjointed mass of uninteresting conversations between the naughty heathen celebrities, in which the amours of the various gods have not been forgotten. There is some very fair writing in the scenes devoted to the fall of Troy, not unmingled with pathos and energy, but after the sublime history of "the blind old man of Scio's rocky isle" the narrative is comparatively tame and unprofitable. These plays are scarcely of value, indeed, at all, except as showing the wide range of subjects which Heywood had studied, and upon which he could treat in a manner more or less successfully. The stories of many of the mythological personages touched upon in the Four Ages will be found dealt with in prose, and at greater length, in Heywood's *Nine Books of Various History Concerning Women*, another tribute to his strong leaning towards old-world lore.

The class of subjects in which the dramatist was most successful again finds exemplification in *The English Traveller*, which is one of those plays devoted to pourtraying domestic life. It does not fail to excite a certain amount of real interest in us, although some of its incidents belong to the impossible, or ought to do so at any rate—such, for instance, as two former lovers renewing their vows, after a long absence, in the bedroom of the lady, who has but recently been married. Such derelictions as this can never be pardoned, however at times they may not appear so glaring when the attention of the reader is diverted by the excellence, beauty, or vigour of the writing. The difficult situation just named has been skilfully managed by Heywood, and there are others where fair tragic power is exhibited. The character of young Geraldine, the early lover, is, perhaps, the best in the play; yet Dalavill, a sleek, smooth villain, who seduces Wincott's wife under the guise of friendship, is conceived with boldness and spirit. But the author's talent is never seen at a very great height either in comedy or in tragedy; a subdued tone in both is all to which he can lay claim. *A Challenge for Beauty* is a rendering of an old Spanish story, and it is justly considered one of Heywood's best pieces. The leading incidents of the tradition are as follows:—Isabella, the proud Queen of Spain and Portugal, arrogated to herself the perfection of female beauty, which one Bonavida, a courtier, had the temerity to dispute. He was banished in consequence, and not permitted to return until he could

bring with him the equal of the imperious beauty. Travelling in foreign climes, he despairs of realising the object of his search until he arrives in England, when he discovers the paragon in the person of a lady named Helena. He is so overpowered by her attractions that he proposes for her hand, and is accepted. Returning to Spain in order to redeem his sentence, he leaves with her a ring from which she is to part under no conditions whatever. Arrived in Spain, he announces that he has succeeded in his quest, and being required to produce the lady, but in vain, he is cast into prison. Two treacherous courtiers are, meanwhile, sent to England by Isabella to obtain possession of the ring. One of them persuades Helena's maid to steal the ring, and, having obtained possession of it, the two rogues depart instantly for Spain. The Queen is loudly triumphant at the success of her nefarious scheme, and Bonavida is pierced to the heart on beholding what he believes to be the proof of his shame in the production of the ring. He is condemned to death, and the period of execution speedily arrives. Just at the fatal moment, and when the executioner is prepared to operate on his victim, Helena appears, and proves her own innocence. The Queen behaves with more grace than might have been expected from her previous character, and acknowledges that she has been equalled in virtue and exceeded in beauty. The whole play is written in capital style, and it never lags in action. The various passions of the human heart have been well personified in the several characters. We have the imperiousness of Isabella, the matchless beauty and purity of Helena, the unyielding nature of Bonavida, and the treachery of Pineda. Some of the conversations are almost brilliant, and the effect of the drama is most satisfactory. Of *Love's Mistress*, which follows the play previously spoken of, in this edition, much need not be said. The argument is taken from Apuleius, and in conversation with Midas we obtain an inkling of the author's views upon the relations between the poet and the public. Lines of real poetry are now and again to be met with in the course of the effusion, but it falls far short of the author when seen at his best. The old story of Cupid and Psyche has been clothed anew, and in the period at which the work was written it became very popular. For our own part, we do not see that Heywood has been so successful as some apprehend in galvanising these ancient legends into new life. There is much that is amusing in this particular allegory, however, and some deep questions are just brushed as with passing wings at the close of the masque. One of the very oldest problems of the world—that of the disparity which exists between man's ideal and his realisation of it—finds its suggestion even amid the grotesque, just as it will thrust itself in everywhere and under all conditions of human life, whether humorous or tragic. Another attempt in this line is the *Rape of Lucrece*, which serves to show, amongst other purposes, the poverty of Heywood as compared with Shakspeare's wonderful wealth in poetic imagery. Some of the characters are invested with all the buffoonery of a Wright or a Toole, which scarcely

accords with one's notions of the dignity attaching to Brutus and his compatriots. The tragedy, in sooth, is as curious a medley as was ever thrown together, notwithstanding that it possesses isolated passages of undoubted excellence. On its title-page we find the extraordinary recommendation on behalf of the play that there will be discovered "several songs in their apt places," sung by Valerius, the merry lord among the Roman peers. A few of these songs are amusing, and several of quite an opposite character. One upon love is somewhat quaint, and runs in the following manner:—

> Now, what is love? I will thee tell:
> It is the fountain and the well
> Where pleasure and repentance dwell;
> It is, perhaps, the sansing bell,
> That rings all in to heaven or hell;
> And this is love, and this is love, as I hear tell.
> Now, what is love? I will you show:
> A thing that creeps and cannot go,
> A prize that passeth to and fro,
> A thing for me, a thing for moe;
> And he that proves shall find it so;
> And this is love, and this is love, sweet friend, I trow.

The play was worth preserving out of curiosity alone, independently of the fact that there is powerful writing to be found in several portions. In the great scene upon which the whole story turns, Heywood has exerted himself to give a worthy representation of the lustful emotions of Tarquin, and the subsequent misery and grief of Lucrece. The lines devoted to the heroine are veritably touching, and redeem many of the absurdities with which the play abounds.

Two other dramas merit some allusion before closing this survey of the bulk of Heywood's published works. The first, *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject*, hath been much commended by many critics, and with certain show of reason. The plot is simplicity itself, and the writing flowing and graceful. It assumes to tell the true story of the devotion exhibited by an English marshal towards his sovereign. While bending to his monarch's will in every particular, the marshal's character is not allowed to degenerate into sycophancy or hypocrisy. To the despotism of the king he is most willing and submissive, but it is with an admirable magnanimity and no trait of cowardice. Several peers of the court being jealous of the favours conferred upon this paragon of virtue, determined to undermine him in the king's regard and procure his disgrace. Incapable of appreciating the noble virtues which procured for the marshal the honours he received at the hands of his sovereign, the lords Clinton and Chester thus express themselves:—

> *Clinton.* These graces are beyond dimension;
> They have nor height nor depth, uncircumscrib'd,
> And without bounds. He like a broad-arm'd tree
> O'ershadows us, and throws his spacious boughs;

We that grow under cannot see the sun,
Nor taste the cheerful warmth of his bright beams:
These branches we must lop by fire or thunder,
Or by his shadowing arms be still kept under.

Chester. I was born eagle-sighted, and to gaze
In the sun's forehead; I will brook no cloud
To stand betwixt me and his glorious fire;
I'll have full light or none, either soar high
Or else sink low; my ominous fate is cast,
Or to be first, or of all abjects last.

The machinations of the scheming peers succeed for a period. The king is prevailed upon to test the affection of his powerful subject to the uttermost by withdrawing from him all his dignities and advantages. He is stripped of his offices one by one, and these are given to his enemies; and, as a last stroke of ill-fortune, having been treated contemptuously, he is banished from court. Utterly overcome by the ingratitude of his sovereign, which he cannot understand, and yet bowing to his expressed will—even to the full bitterness of its terms—the marshal delivers himself of a speech full of true dignity and nobility. It has in it no tinge of bitterness, no reproach, but is charged only with sadness and regret that his faithful service should have been so misunderstood by him whom he loved so deeply, and for whom he had fought on the battle-field. The portion of the scene in which the king and the marshal address each other is so admirable that we venture to extract it:—

Marshal. Those that are wronged may speak:
My Lord, I let you know my innocence,
And that my true and unstain'd loyalty
Deserves not this disgrace: none ever bore
Like eminence with me that hath discharg'd it
With better zeal and conscience; for my service
Let my wounds witness: I have some to show
That, had I not my body interpos'd,
Had been your scars. All my deserved honours
You have bestow'd upon my enemies—
Ay, such as have whole skins,
And never bled but for their ease and health.
You might with as much justice take my life
As seize my honours: howsoe'er, my Lord,
Give me free leave to speak but as I find;
I ever have been true, you now unkind.

King. Will you contest?
What have you, sir, that is not held from us?
Or what can your own virtue purchase you
Without our grace? Are not your fortunes, favours,
And your revenues ours? Where should they end
But where they first began? Have we not power
To give our own? or must we ask your counsel
To grace where you appoint? Need we a guardian,
Or aim you at the place?

Marshal. Oh, my dread King,
It sorrows me that you misprize my love,

And with more freedom I could part with life
Than with your Grace : my offices, alas !
They were my troubles, but to want your favours,
That only thus afflicts my loyal thoughts,
And makes me bold to term your Grace unkind.

King. Sir, we command you to abandon Court
And take it as a favour that we now
Not question of your life ; without reply
Leave us.

Marshal. I'll leave the Court as I would leave my burden,
But from your Highness in this kind to part
Is as my body should forsake my heart.

The brave soldier's troubles do not end with banishment. Knowing that he possesses two daughters who are most dear to him, the king despatches a nobleman to him commanding him to send to the court the one who is the marshal's special favourite. The elder is sent, and she so wins upon the king by her grace and beauty that he makes her his queen. Understanding from her some time afterwards, and when she is *enceinte*, that her beauty is not comparable with that of her sister, the king waxes into a pretended passion, and sends her home to her father, at the same time demanding from the latter his other daughter. The marshal delays complying for three months, and then returns the queen crowned, attended by her sister, while he himself craves permission to make his sovereign a present. The king assenting, the marshal presents him with a young prince (the monarch's son) in a magnificent cradle. A reconciliation ensues, and the king confers his sister's hand upon the widowed marshal. From the deepest depth the king's trusted friend is lifted to a greater height than any he ever before enjoyed. The subject of the drama is a happy one, and, if it be not treated with unusual vigour, there is an evenness of execution to be met with rarely observable in Heywood.

Fortune by Land and Sea is the last of the plays reprinted in this edition, and it is almost alone amongst the dramatist's works for the triple excellence of character, action, and construction. It is one of the very few in which Heywood resorted to collaboration, and the joint labours of himself and one Rowley prove that collaboration is not necessarily an evil. Coherency and consistency have certainly been achieved between the parts of this drama with wonderful success. Its pictures of life are true and vivid, and it is altogether a specimen of good, honest work. Frank Forrest is a full-blooded young Englishman, who is fond of excellent company wherever he can meet with it. Being one day in a tavern when his father is insulted, a quarrel ensues, and the courageous young fellow is killed. Old Forrest, who loved his boy deeply, grieves sorely over this event. The death is revenged by another son in a duel, after fighting which successfully the avenger has to make his escape. All these events are graphically depicted, as well as the grief of old Forrest and subsequent adventures of his son. The language is in no scene absolutely eloquent, but neither is it exactly commonplace. The play is

most readable, and possesses stronger dramatic interest than many of its fellows.

Not equal to Marlowe for the breadth and richness of his imagination, or to Chapman for the wide sweep of his ideal vision, Heywood was nevertheless a man who made a valuable and substantial addition to English literature. His merits chiefly lie in his direct and homely method of dealing with domestic subjects, and the generally pure and genial fancy which colours such subjects with a pleasing, if sober, light. He has himself prevented his name from being placed as high in our dramatic *rôle* as it might have been, by ignoring the principles of his art in too many instances, and by a general neglect in perfecting for posterity that which might have passed muster in his own time disfigured with many blemishes. What he wrote in the "infancy of judgment" he is to blame for having perpetuated in the supposed wisdom of age. It is perfectly easy, nevertheless, to trace the loving spirit in most of what he has accomplished, and our pity for his folly is certainly not alloyed by any feeling of contempt. The probability is that, as acting was the thing nearest at hand with him, and that by which he was compelled principally to acquire his means of sustenance, it never flashed across his mind till late in life that the noblest part of him had as yet been uncommitted to the world. He does not appear to have worked as a dramatist from any fixed principles of composition, but simply to have interpreted with all the simplicity of a simple nature those phases of it which came under his own direct observation. Regarded in this light, we know of few authors who deserve so high a commendation. Nature is with him in all, and his trust in the best human instincts is unwavering. He is not appalled by the corruptions of society or the villainy of the individual; he has faith that human nature will shine out, pure and unsullied, after its temptations and its anguish; and he entertains, in fact, no doubt whatever as to its ultimate excellence and goodness. Infused by a beautiful spirit of tolerance and virtue, he remains, not a grand or magnificent being, but one thoroughly true to himself, and with more than the ordinary capacity for interpreting the aspirations and emotions of humanity.

G. B. S.

Mont-Dore.

It is strange that English people know so little of the interior of France. I am struck with this each time that my steps lead me out of the beaten track to some corner better worth visiting, for one cause or another, than half the places in Germany, where my countrymen congregate year after year. Our physicians, while sending their patients to the most distant spots in Bohemia, the Engadine, nay, even Ischia, have, up to very lately, ignored many of those potent springs nearer at hand, which were known as far back as the time of the Romans, and the valuable properties of which the French faculty have recognised for the last half century. Among these baths, perhaps the most notable is Mont-Dore, the very name of which is unknown to the great mass of English people, and will generally be productive of a puzzled look and a timid enquiry as to whether it is not "somewhere in the South of France?" No, my friend, Mont-Dore is in Auvergne, and Auvergne is a district well worth visiting, for other than hygienic motives. Its volcanic range of mountains, its Druidical and Gallic remains, its Romanesque churches and Middle-Age castles, its pine woods and trout streams, desolate purple plains and laughing lowlands, rich in vegetation, cannot fail to fascinate every lover of nature or art, be he geologist, archeologist, architect, or artist. But of one thing it is fair to warn you. Although but sixteen hours distant from Paris (six of these being beyond the reach of rails), this district is more primitive than the wildest of those Bohemian baths you have toiled many days to reach. Adieu here to luxurious hotels, fine raiment, bands of music, mundane pleasures of every description. Man is of little moment here. Nature, whether you worship her as she sends her health-restoring stream boiling from the rock, or stand on the edge of an extinct crater and watch the twilight drink away the golden sunset from the sharp basaltic pinnacles around, Nature is paramount in the Monts-Dore.

The drive from Clermont-Ferrand, where you leave the train for a diligence, is an almost continuous ascent of six hours. The change is gradual from the fertile soil of the thickly-inhabited plain, where the wealth of apricots, carted away by the bushel, explains the cause of Clermont's celebrity for "pâte d'abricots," to the rocky uplands, where nothing grows but short fine turf and purple heather, and the only living creatures are a shepherd and his flock. The view from the summit is very beautiful. On the one side, the range of the Puy de Dôme, with the richly-cultivated plain we have just left, at its feet; on the other, two marvellous basaltic giants rising from a gorge, like twin fortresses

guarding the pass, backed by the rocky folds of the Monts-Dore, and the wooded slopes below them. We now enter upon scenery not unlike Switzerland, minus its snowy peaks and toy châlets. The road winds among pine-clad hills, above which rise jagged walls of granite, until we reach the opening of the narrow valley, in the centre of whose green basin of pasture land lies Mont-Dore.

The first aspect of the place is decidedly repellant. The stern, serviceable little town, granite-and-grey-slated, possesses no variety of colour or folly of architectural irregularity to seduce the understanding. It tells a plain unvarnished tale of snow and exile from the world during six months of the year, with a "season" of less than three, during which the efforts of every industrious inhabitant are devoted to extracting as much as possible out of the visitors with the least possible outlay. No wonder all is dear, for everything is dragged up here in June and vanishes in September; doctors and hotel-keepers disappear, shops are shut up, the road to Clermont becomes impassible, the post comes on horseback from "La Bourboulle," the carriages retire into outer darkness for so long that they must blink when they meet the daylight again, and the horses—chief source of revenue in the summer—must eat their heads off until the following year. Let it be remembered, too, that living is much more expensive than it was in France, and also that many articles of food have to be brought long distances, before we cavil at the high rate of charges at the hotels here.

A few words as to the history of Mont-Dore. Its waters were known and used by the Gauls, and, subsequently, by the Romans. To the former has been attributed a quadrangular bath, formed of square blocks of pine, and capable of holding fifteen persons, which was found in a state of perfect preservation in 1823. The Roman baths were spread over a much greater surface than that occupied by the present town; the largest fragments of their columns, together with some sculptured stones that clearly belong to an early Norman church have been collected, and set up in a somewhat incongruous pile upon the Promenade. How and when the Gallo-Roman town was destroyed is not known. The baths, like most others throughout Europe, seem to have been forgotten in the Middle Ages, and only to have been recalled to the recollection of suffering humanity at the beginning of this century. The scheme of an Establishment was then conceived, and the buildings, still in existence, begun, though they were not completed till 1823. Since that year little has been done to advance the prosperity of the place, but, as the concession to the present lessee of the baths terminates next year, certain imperative improvements are to be looked for. The accommodation is much too limited for the number of bathers, necessitating that some should be roused as early as 2 A.M. Of course none but feeble-minded persons will submit to such penance; still, it is sought to be imposed on most new comers; for, as no baths are given after ten o'clock in the morning, it is clear that, in order that the supply may meet the demand, some must be taken over

night! As in most cases in life, I suppose, the weakest goes to the wall. The "Salle d'Aspiration," of which I shall speak presently, is also much too small, and singularly ill-regulated, or rather, not regulated at all. There is no thermometer, an attendant rushes in two or three times in the course of the morning, and, seeing that the room has become so full of vapour as to render breathing a difficulty, he throws a window wide open, at the eminent peril of the perspiring multitude, who retreat, cowering, into a sort of inner sanctuary until the *salle* is purified. All this needs radical change.

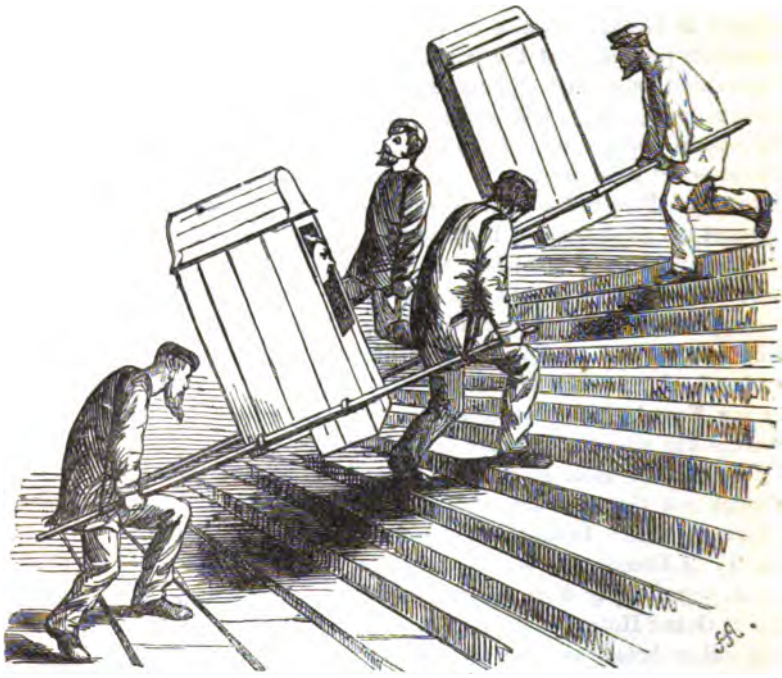
The waters of Mont-Dore contain carbonic acid, bicarbonate of soda, chalk, iron, and other elements, among them being arsenic. Their efficacy is beyond question in cases of tubercles on the lungs, asthma, bronchitis (especially of the irritable, spasmodic kind), thickening of the Eustachian tube, and chronic diseases of the larynx, windpipe, and mucous membrane. The modes of application are various, according to the nature and position of the enemy that is to be attacked and routed. Douches, "Pulverisation" (the term applied to the spray-system), Inhalation, Foot-baths, and Garglings, are the new auxiliary forces that support the great army of body-baths, and beckers of hot water, wherewith the victories of Mont-Dore were formerly won. I cannot doubt the universal testimony of those I met who had returned here a second year, having derived signal benefit from their "first course." "Not a single cold last winter." "For the first time for years I had no cough last spring." I was told this repeatedly, and was made further acquainted by my French friends with all the intimate evils which these blessed springs had alleviated, and are on their road to cure.

By far the most aristocratic, and I believe the most comfortable, though not the most agreeably situated hotel at Mont-Dore is that of Chabaury Ainé. In its small, unpretentious salon you will meet the best society in France, and for that privilege, with two meals and a tiny bedroom, you will pay from thirteen to fifteen francs a day. The tariff of the "Grand Hotel" is yet higher, and its company many degrees lower. The other hotels are less expensive, and their accommodation fairly good; but the living here, at the best, is homely, and such relish as it may possess is mainly attributable to that best of *chefs*, the keen mountain air.

The manners and customs of Mont-Dore resemble the politics which prevail at Madame Chabaury's table d'hôte; they are anti-revolutionary, and have suffered but little change within this century. To see the sedan-chairs (Fig. 1) hurrying to and fro across the "Place," of a morning, escorted in some instances by a "running footman" or woman; to see these chairs jostling and charging each other at full tilt upon the staircase of the "Établissement," recalls the boisterous encounters between chairs hoop-and-powder-laden, of which we read in days when George II. was king. Very unlike our present squeamish refinement, too, is the spectacle of an obese gentleman, who has just stepped out of bed, with a

flannel hood upon his head, a pair of *sabots* on his feet, and a dressing-gown folded round his stomach, walking leisurely to the public well, and gargling his throat there, as composedly as though he were in his dressing-room. (Fig. 2.) Then, the "Aspiration" ... but listen to the programme of a morning's work. I am woke at 5 A.M., if the noise overhead from yet earlier risers has not already roused me; am pushed, in a semi-somnolent state, into a sedan, and away my bearers scuttle with me to the Magdalene spring, where I imbibe a glass of hot water before going to the

FIG. 1.



Salle d'Aspiration. (Fig. 3.) I am the happy possessor of numerous little tickets, which I diffuse, one to my sedan-bearers, one to the doorkeeper of the Salle, one to the attendant for a not-unnecessary towel. This paper currency represents a gross sum of 1 franc 60 centimes. A shirt of flannel or linen, trowsers, the older the better, and a pair of sabots, constitute the costume which is *de rigueur* for the Salle. For the transit to and fro, a thick coat and a "Maud" are all that is required, though one is told on arrival at Mont-Dore that a complete suit of flannels is indispensable; the only article that really is so being the *sabots*. Thus clad, I enter a room, the aspect of which combines something of the shadowy terror of Dante's Purgatory with the grim reality of the hulks. Surely that file of melancholy men, walking round and round in slow

time, with heads bent upon their chests, wiping the drops of agony from their brows, must be convicts? (Fig. 4.) The atmosphere is that of a thick London fog; impossible, at times, to distinguish anything three yards off; and it is these fumes, into which the inherent properties of the water pass, which are so beneficial to the respiratory organs. But *surtout, pas trop de zèle* is sound advice in all things. Vapour and fresh air are both good things in their way; administered without stint, however, in quick suc-

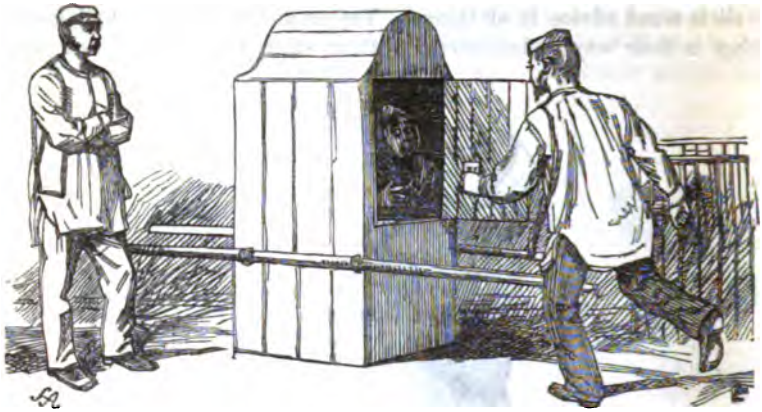
Fig. 2.

cession as they here are, one wishes that the *zèle* that lavishes both upon us were moderated.

In the same building is the "Salle de la Pulvérisation," where sprays of all shapes and sizes are applied in certain cases of nasal, bronchial, and oral obstruction. It is seldom that the patient is condemned to "aspire," and also to be "pulverised." After forty-five minutes of either process, swathed to the eyes, he is hurried into the sedan, made to drink a second glass of water, and carried back to bed, which the maid insists on heating with a warming-pan before one is permitted to enter it. At the end of an hour one is again roused, again pushed into a sedan, again hurried across the "Place." This time it is to the ordinary bath. Here I am probably visited by the doctor, who feels my pulse, speaks of the weather, and tells me to continue

doing as I did yesterday. On my return to my room, the maid appears again with her warming-pan. But this time I rebel; I scorn a third edition of bed; clothe myself, and stave off the agonies of hunger with a

Fig. 3.



crust, awaiting breakfast which will not be ready for another hour and a half. When it comes, I sit next a charming old marquis, who takes snuff with the air of the Grand Monarque, tells an improper story with *infinite* delicacy, and stands bare-headed, hat in hand, for ten minutes in the

Fig. 4.

street, when he meets a lady. All the others at our table are equally Legitimists. "*Je suis radicale blanche enragée*," replies a fair lady, when I venture to ask her politics. I have thus a fine opportunity of *studying* one section of French society, with its high-minded devotion to a cause it

recognises as hopeless—for the present. My neighbours converse most agreeably and without reserve. Whether they would do so with a stranger of their own country—one whom they found was not "*bien pensant*" I doubt. I observe that the White Lilies resolutely close their petals against the few Imperial Bees who have strayed into their parterre. There was a private dinner among the *crême de la crême* one night, at which the King's health was drunk with enthusiasm, and the ladies, discarding the simple toilette which is the rule here, appeared in gala dress, with flowers in their hair, and roused the men to transports of fiery loyalty with their songs. Had there been a band, I should have expected it to strike up "O Richard, O mon Roi;" but alas! there is no band in Mont-Dore; only a piano, which, like everything else, is a relic of the past—a spinet in disguise.

After breakfast the "Place" presents a curious spectacle. It is crowded with saddle-horses, donkeys, and one or two ricketty *calèches*. This is the day's market; the great event of the twenty-four hours, for every owner of a four-footed beast of burthen. There is no fixed price for anything, to carry anybody anywhere. The sound commercial principle of supply and demand regulates each morning's transactions. The horse you paid yesterday twelve francs for you may get to-day for three. Sunshine is the motive-power that rules this Exchange-mart. The horizon is clear, not a cloud obscures the summit of the Pic de Sancy and Mont-Dore is full to overflow; there is no limit to the demands of the sturdy Auvergnese to-day, and the man who hesitates is lost: in half an hour not an animal of any description will be left upon the "Place." We return from our ride—or *should* return, if we do our duty—soon after four o'clock, to drink with Magdalene, gargle with Cæsar, and take a foot-bath with St. John. And not alone, alas! with the tutelary Saint of the Spring, but with two companions in the flesh, who plunge their feet into the same trough with me! (Fig. 5.) Happily it is running water: let the fastidious be comforted by this reflection. (Nevertheless, whenever I can, I secure a position, like the wolf in the fable, at the *top* of the stream.) The "*traitement*" is now over for the day. We dine at half-past five, and drink our coffee on the Promenade. The music consists of a blind beggar playing upon his *musette*, the old Auvergnese instrument which suggested so many pastoral melodies to the early French composers. Remember this, and curse not, when you hear the most hideous combination of sounds that perverse human ingenuity ever devised. Haply, you may find another link with the music of the past, if the peasants, on the evening of a fête-day, dance a *bourrée* on the Promenade, as they sometimes do. In the Reading-room, at eight o'clock, a little comedy or operetta is played, without scenic illusion, by two or three actors, whose performance is good enough to pass away an hour, if the evening be not warm enough to prefer sitting out of doors. By ten o'clock everyone is in bed. And this, with little variation, is the routine of life at Mont-Dore.

Stern and unlovely as the first aspect of this little valley is, climb into

the woods, toil up the glades of hoary pine, to the falling waters of the Plat-à-Barbe, to the Scierie, to the Capucin, or the Gorge de l'Enfer, you will find that the walks have infinite, though perhaps not much varied, beauty. The blue-green shade of undeciduous pines and firs, from whose lower branches depend venerable grey beards of moss, give place, here and there, to open lawns, and heathery spaces, where the wild pink flushes of a deeper red, as we ascend, and the gentian opens its intense blue eyes on us. Thin streams of water, tumbling over rocks, an outlook from the summits necessarily bounded by the wall of the Pic de Sancy, and the

Fig. 5.

folding mountains on every side save one; these are the themes upon which Nature modulates, with the genius of an Improvisatore, devising with the subtlety of semitones, and by a new combination of the old materials, to produce fresh passages of harmony.

The Pic de Sancy must be ascended on foot or on horseback, and the laziest man will be repaid his trouble if he selects a day when the jagged teeth of the Pic cut the blue sky sharply, and no fleecy hosiery clings to the neighbouring heights. Half the visitors at Mont-Dore are probably also bound for the Pic, in which case no guide is necessary, unless you contemplate riding on to the Lac de Pavin (an additional five hours' tour), or propose returning either by the *Cratères*, or by the Puy de Cliergue, where, in some places, no path is indicated. The Pic is 6,186 feet above

the sea-level, and is the highest point in France until we reach the Pyrenees. Two hours' ride brings you to a narrow table-land, where your horse must be left; the remaining twenty minutes of steep ascent being performed on foot. The view from the summit is glorious, and even to the most ignorant of geology very interesting. You find yourself surrounded by extinct volcanoes, crater-lakes, fantastic peaks of basalt upon every side. There, to the north, is that long range of Domes, locally called "Puys," extending to the north and south of Clermont. A friend of mine has an ingenious theory relative to these "Puys," founded upon the facts as stated in Mr. Scrope's valuable work, which is worth mentioning here, as I found it harmonize perfectly with my own unscientific observations. He supposes these "Puys" to be bubbles of steam and mud, brought to the surface of the bed of an extremely deep and tranquil sea, the presence of which prevented them from expanding and bursting. See how the forms of those hills to the north are flattened: they are all portions of the great balsatic plateau, formed by the lava which flowed from various craters over the flat bed of the ocean. These craters would be bubbles of a subsequent date, which burst when the process of upheaval had diminished the depth of the sea, and the consequent pressure, and were finally raised above the water, vomiting forth ashes and loose stones. Observe, with a strong glass, the Puy de Tartaret, to the eastward, the black lava mound of Murols below it, and the valley all tumbled about with scoriæ: how aptly it illustrates these views.

The excursion to the Château de Murols itself, and on to Saint Nectaire, is full of varied interest, and the country traversed is eloquent in proclaiming the marvels of its creation. About two miles from Mont-Dore the road branches off from the one to Clermont and becomes wild and friendless, not unlike certain moorland districts in Cumberland, but with sharper articulation of outlines. You come presently to the back of that extinct crater, and the rugged wall of rock along whose summit we picked our way "delicately," like Agag, when returning from the Pic de Sancy. The form of the mountains is very fine seen from here, and the blue shadows of early morning that define every fissure in the basalt, every seam that marks the course of the burning lava down the crater's side, add greatly to their beauty. By and by you see, to the right, the smiling little lake of Cambon, studded with islands, which some believe to be an extinct crater, though it seems more probable that from the red lips of the awful "Tartaret," dominating it, the lava pouring from the two mouths (still distinctly seen) arrested the waters of the little stream, La Couze, and bound them up into this basin. The first aspect of the castle of Murols is grand and startling, but it loses, as one descends into the valley, out of which the black conical steep which the castle crowns rises so abruptly. The hill looks almost artificial, so unbroken is it by inequality of outline or surface, except such as is procured by terraced vines. It is as though a Pyramid had been transplanted to the banks of

the Rhine, and there "utilized." I cannot think, with Mérimée, that "sous le rapport purement pittoresque" the Château de Murols is pre-eminent. Except from one point of view, on the Road to Saint Nectaire, it is a subject no artist would select. But as you climb up, over loose ashes and scoriæ, to the colossal fortress, whose complicated buildings of various dates cover several acres; as you stand on the battlement, and the eye seizes the various details of the wondrous panorama below, there is no feeling of disappointment, for the spot has an interest and beauty of its own which the brush of no mortal painter could transfer to canvas. Over against you rises the red scoriaceous "Tartaret," clad to the very mouth in pines, out of whose lava the swarthy village of Murols at its feet was hewn and built. Lava is on every side: the wall on which you stand is built of it, the valley is broken up with fantastic heaps of ashes, like the remains of a giant's fire that died out last night; loose blocks of basalt lie all around; the impress of the great convulsion which upheaved this country unknown ages since remains as fresh as though it had just taken place.

The first mention of the castle of Murols occurs in 1223; but antiquaries agree that no portion of the existing buildings date earlier than the fifteenth century. Before the days of cannon its position must have been impregnable. The volcanic soil is said to be favourable to the botanist. We met a priest, herbal in hand, who was thus innocently enjoying his holiday far from the great city which was the theatre of his spiritual labours. The simple man's delight in the Flora of Auvergne was a homily upon the worth of those pure pleasures which we draw direct from Nature. I lamented that I could only appreciate the powerful aroma of the wild thyme; and felt, as I have often done, that, for the enjoyment of life, it is curiously untrue that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

Two miles beyond Murols is St. Nectaire *d'en Bas*, where your driver will stop, unless you insist on his climbing the additional mile to St. Nectaire *d'en Haut*. Here are the only objects of interest, and the only good hotel. The church is a perfect example of the Auvergnese-Romanesque architecture of the eleventh century; possessing a family resemblance to Notre Dame du Port, at Clermont, and the churches of Issoire and Brioude. The apse is formed of three clustered chapels (Brioude has five), and is ornamented with exterior mosaics. It has an octagonal tower, perhaps of a later date; in other respects the entire church seems to have remained untouched since it was built. The carved capitals in the choir, though rude, are worth attention. Mérimée devoted some time in trying to discover the meaning of some of these groups, and confesses himself puzzled. The position of this interesting church, at the edge of a rock-platform, on to which the little village seems trying to scramble, part of it having effected a foot-hold, part clinging to the steep hill-side, is really picturesque, and recalls Italy, like many other village-crowned heights in Auvergne. But the chief glory of St. Nectaire, and—

excepting its mineral springs—its more productive source of profit, is the incrusting grotto, where everything, from a dead horse downwards, can be turned into an *objet d'art* by being endued with a thick crust of carbonate of lime. The objects encrusted are supposed to resemble ivory; to me they look as if an ingenious school-boy had cut them out of soft-soap and composite candles. But Paris delights to enclose the New Year sugar-plums in caskets made of the St. Nectaire incrustations, and pays largely for them. The baths enjoy a great local celebrity: their chief components are chalk, bicarbonate of soda, and chlorate of sodium: they are recommended in cases of gout, gravel, and other internal disorders. The waters *d'en Haut* differ from those *d'en Bas*. I entered one of the bath-rooms at the latter establishment, and I can only hope that, like certain estimable people, their valuable properties are in an inverse ratio to their repulsive exteriors. A "whited sepulchre" would certainly be preferable to the dirty stone sarcophagus I saw.

The drives about Mont-Dore are not numerous; the prettiest is that by Murat-le-Quaire to Sainte Sauve, and back by La Bourboulle. Sainte Sauve is a prettily-situated village, on a vine-clad hill. Below it, the river Dordogne has been driven, fork-wise, asunder by the formation of what may really be called an "emerald isle"—all green sward and embowering trees; and the favoured haunt of those jewel-winged insects wherewith ladies deck themselves. The pale blue ones—the most esteemed—are found in abundance here up to the middle of July, after which they all vanish. When I visited the island, the last scion of this blue-blooded race alone was left, dragging out an enfeebled existence at the bottom of a tumbler, with a make-believe of summer joys, in the shape of a little wet grass, provided for it by the old woman who offered it for purchase. Seen on a golden day, this strange little islet, set in the midst of gleaming waters, and tenanted only by emerald and azure moths, has something fairy-like about it—as though it might, not inaptly, be the scene of mythic tales, dear to our childhood, and which we have grown, alas! to call "impossible!"

Returning to the high-road of prose—but a prose of beautiful periods—the drive to La Bourboulle follows the windings of the Dordogne, between rocks and woods, and small fields of "sarrazin" snatched from the slopes here and there, where a few roods of level soil admit of cultivation. The road is crowded with the donkeys and pedestrians of La Bourboulle—a youthful rival to Mont-Dore. As you approach, it looks like an amateur sketch of a town, done with a blunt pencil, in which none of the lines are straight, and there is an absence of all "composition." An embryo Casino, the hint of a promenade, half-a-dozen bald hotels, a few planks across a stony river (drawing-master's style), nothing finished, nothing connected—these are the materials out of which a great Bath is rising rapidly into notice. Its success seems absolutely assured, being the growth of little more than five years (Murray for 1869 completely ignores it); and already it is formidable and

hateful to Mont-Dore. For there is a certain resemblance between the waters, though with important differences; that of La Bourboulle, for instance, containing a far larger amount of arsenic. The French faculty esteem it highly in cutaneous disorders, in certain throat complaints, and in many cases of neuralgia. But the preternatural dullness of the place hitherto has kept away many Parisians who were ordered here; some of them preferring even to reside at Mont-Dore, and perform a double daily journey of five miles in an omnibus, for the baths and waters, rather than sleep at La Bourboulle! The air is much less bracing; and the season consequently begins a fortnight earlier, and ends a month later, than at Mont-Dore, over which the Pic de Sancy sends its icy shadow. The hotels are even dearer, and with less excuse; for La Bourboulle is more accessible, but the buildings, which are rising on all sides, will exercise a wholesome influence on prices; and as it expands and strengthens year by year, La Bourboulle will no doubt be resorted to by other nations than the French.

I fear I have already exceeded the limits accorded to a notice like the foregoing; it is time I stopped. If these few words of mine should lead the wanderer in search of health or of natural beauty in little-trodden ways to the mountain baths of Auvergne, his thanks, which I accept beforehand, will be my reward.

H. A.

The Poetry of the Italian Dialects: North Italy.

Not a few travellers descending into Italy over the Stelvio or the Brenner take out their purses to calculate how far they will have succeeded in getting rid of their Austrian paper-money before crossing the frontier. If they find a ten-kreuzer note clean enough to be decipherable they may be struck by the elaborate character of the engraving on its small surface—Hercules, and the nameless young lady with a crown of flowers in one hand and a bundle of spears in the other, who stand as supporters to the legend; the trophy of bayonets and flags below, and the infant-bestridden jabberwocks who prance at the top of the design. Any diversion is welcome on a long journey, so they may try to interest themselves next in seeing how the words "twopence halfpenny" look in ten different languages. The reflections of the common-place tourist will doubtless sum themselves up into the not unreasonable wish that Austria would have gold and silver coins like other Christian nations. But it is only fair that he should know what a fund of instruction this minute bank note may afford. A careful examination of the several equivalents for *ten*, zehn, tiz, deset, dziesiée, dieci, &c., may open to him some of the profoundest mysteries of comparative philology; or, as a political fact, this wonderful agglomeration of nationalities in one empire may be new to him, and, besides suggesting all kinds of geographical and historical puzzles, may develop in him a new sympathy for the Imperial Royal and Apostolic personage who has to guide the destinies and to temper and attune the jarring interests of so many peoples, nations, and languages. At any rate, as he nears Bormio or Verona, he is ready to congratulate King Victor Emmanuel on ruling over an Italy at last one and indivisible, through a language one and undivided. For this is the common idea among tourists—as of Italy so of her language. Men traverse the length and breadth of the peninsula from Venice to Palermo and know little of the differences of race and traditions, of feelings and habits and interests, which divide the population; little of the old and ever active enmities and rivalries which separate town from town; little of local grievances and regrets and discontents, fostered by secret societies, and fostering in their turn the curse of brigandage and a general lawlessness. Yet these are the real things which made Italian unity so difficult to accomplish, which still threaten its stability. But the man who on the other side of the Alps would sigh over the oppressed nationalities of Czechs and Magyars, wonders what Sicilians can find to grumble at in the government of strangers from Piedmont. And so with regard to the language. A tourist is contented

to know that Italian is the language of Italy. The guide-books tells him that this language is spoken most correctly at Siena, and they supply and translate a proverb from which he may further learn that the pleasantest accent is that of Rome. But he would be politely incredulous if he were told that the popular speech of Milan is all but unintelligible at Genoa or Venice, and that the language of a Piedmontese seems to the reckless, impudent Neapolitans as great a wonder as his serious, thrifty, industrious temper.

There are probably at least fifty well-defined varieties of dialect still spoken in Italy and the islands. Prince L. L. Bonaparte, the generous and indefatigable patron of philological study, divides them into two great sections, which may be indicated geographically as spoken north and south of a line drawn from Spezia to Rimini. Below the line the dialects are marked by the prominence of the vowel sounds, above it by the strength of the tonic accent. Eight families are roughly indicated as belonging to each division, but each family can show an almost incredible number of sub-species and varieties. Thus in Sardinia there are three chief dialects, but that of central Sardinia has itself sixteen sub-dialects, whose differences are quite appreciable in print, and probably are recognised with still greater ease by the ear. Signor Zuccagni-Orlandini, who set himself to collect specimens of the leading dialects, did not consider his task complete until he could print forty-four distinct versions of a familiar dialogue. These dialects offer a wide and almost unworked field for study, and any patient investigator of their eccentricities would be certainly rewarded by the solution of some most difficult and interesting problems in the science of language. The origin and history of the Romance tongues, specially of the written and classical Italian; their relation to the popular Latin; the differences of race, of history, circumstances and temperament which have contributed to develop or emphasize their peculiarities; the different vitality of the dialects of different provinces, and their influence on the politics and divisions of Italy; what vigorous and racy expressions they have preserved which are lost in the *Volgare Illustre*, and what part they have still to play in the final settlement of the common language—these and many more are questions which could receive elucidation or illustration from a careful and intelligent study of the Italian dialects.

But without tempting the public to poach on the preserves of the scholar, I hope to point out some bye-paths where it may wander innocently among flowers, and gather some graceful specimens to add to its store of legends and lyrics.

About a dozen of the Italian dialects have been raised by the genius and public spirit of provincial poets from the low estate of *patois* to the dignity of literary languages. About ten more are fixed and cultivated sufficiently to possess their own dictionaries. Poetry of all kinds, romance, comedy, satire, translation (from Homer in Neapolitan to Béranger in Piedmontese), have been the various fields of their triumphs. Some of the greatest names

in later Italian literature, notably Goldoni, Alfieri, and Parini, have illustrated by compositions of their own the flexibility and racy force of the language of their province, and probably of their own childhood. There is nothing surprising in this when we know how Italians of the highest cultivation habitually use in their homes and in familiar conversation their native dialect, and Tuscan critics are pleased to excuse the supposed stiffness of non-Tuscan writers, by showing that these latter are constrained to translate into the *Volgare Illustre* the thoughts they conceive in their own mother tongue.

But the largest class of dialectic poetry, if not more spontaneous, is more strictly popular. It must be sought in the mouths of the people, or in books "on grey paper with blunt type," which have never reached the dignity of an octavo page. From a few such volumes, collected in a recent tour through Lombardy and Piedmont, I extract some specimens to show the character of the poetry of some of the dialects of North Italy. To begin with Venice. Of the popular poetry of Tuscany far the largest part consists of *rispetti*—"short poems varying from six to twelve lines, constructed on the principle of the octave stanza." Mr. Symonds has given ample specimens of these, translated with a grace to which I may not aspire, in his recent *Sketches in Italy and Greece*. But neither this form, nor the Roman three-lined *stornello*, seem to have acclimatised themselves in Venice. In Bernoni's collection of Venetian popular songs there are very few *rispetti*, and not a single *stornello*. In their stead we find ballads (of which hereafter), *ninne-nanne*, cradle songs and lullabies, and an immense number of *strambotti*—little poems of four lines of eleven syllables. They should have two rhymes, but these are often mere assonants, sometimes neglected altogether. I have attempted no greater regularity in translation. Yet sometimes the *strambotto* is clearly made for the rhyme; *cuore, amore, fiore* are *so* tempting. Love and youth, this is all they sing. There is often much pathos, much sweetness in the way they handle these well-worn themes. But their frankness is undoubtedly their greatest charm, not only because it is so attractive itself, but because the verses thus unconsciously emphasize the liveliest and most delightful feature of love as it is known in Italy. It may be as warm as you will, but always genuine and open, too real to be buried under thoughts of work and daily needs, or to be chaffed out by a cynic sneer. It can be serious without whining; never attitudinises, never makes a parade of its sorrows or successes. At times it may seem wanting in imagination, but here it is true to the Italian character, and this in its turn reflects the Italian climate. So their songs, as M. Boullier (Chants Populaires de la Sardaigne) has well observed, say quite frankly "pourquoi ne pas s'abandonner au plaisir de vivre, et, quand la réalité est si douce, se consumer en rêveries? *Ce qu'on possède à quoi bon l'imaginer?*" and frankly enough these *strambotti* prattle on—of youth, which is always delicious; of love, which is always young.

Here a lover is sighing:—

> As I pass beneath thy window, let thy face shine forth above,
> Thou flower of my paradise, thou mirror of my love.

But the prayer is at least superfluous, for already behind her blinds the lady is singing,—

> If he who goes by were my true love,
> To the window I'm sure I should spring;
> If the lad who goes by were my own love,
> I should know by his footstep's ring.

Alas! she must wait, or sing again,—

> The Vesper-bell, and Beppo comes not yet—
> Has death his life, or woman stolen his love?
> Or he is dead and with the saints above,
> Or some false fair too well her snare has set.

At last he comes, and greets her with some pretty compliment—

> January and February lament
> Their nights no more are star-besprent.
> They'll find, when love has made them wise,
> Their truant stars in Lisa's eyes—

and pleads his love with such sweet insistance, that the very fullness of their happiness makes her fear that it cannot be stable, and she prays so naïvely:—

> Kindly Fortune, stay thy wheel:
> Must thou every blessing steal?
> Must such love be passion-tost?
> Must such happiness be lost?

It seems heartless to rob these little flowers of their colour and fragrance, and almost of their life, by transplanting them to our chilly atmosphere. But even so they may do their work, and win their praise, by recalling to some readers evenings spent in happy exile, in that "Paradise of Exiles," Italy. More than one Italian lad who has roamed with the writer, rather as a friend than a servant, over the Alban Hills, or among the rocks and sea-caves of Capri, has implored his companion to let him follow him to his northern home. "The English were *simpatici*, and there was much gold in England." I tried to draw the reverse of the medal thus sharply struck on the boy's brain: the ploughman slouching home, drenched and tired, and huddling himself into bed supperless and prayerless at seven or eight o'clock, to save a light and fuel, and to bury in sleep care and hunger which he cannot appease. The lonely seamstress working her fingers to the bone in a gloomy London garret, and earning little more than what may keep her husband's greedy, cruel fingers from the clothes which he might pawn for drink. He smiles incredulously this child of earth and the sun, who, when tourists are gone, will be lazily pruning vines, loading the fragrant lemons, or dancing

and struggling to keep under the ripe grapes which laughing girls pour knee-high into his vat. Braced rather than wearied with his work, when evening comes he plunges his strong, straight limbs, and tosses his chestnut curls in the blue waves of the little bay, and then hastens to meet his bright wife and the little ones at the door of the church, where the villagers are joining together before the kindly Presence in some simple prayer.

Ne gravis somnus irruat,
Nec hostis nos surripiat,
Nec caro illi consentiens,
Nos Tibi reos statuat.

The women draw their gay kerchiefs over their heads and away to bed as good housewives wont; he turns to eat his luscious mess of maccaroni and love-apples under some vine-laden pergola, listening the while to a *cantastorie* reciting in low impassioned tones the weird beauty of Armida, or the love "passing the love of women," which blessed the lives of Medoro and Cloridano, the Nisus and Euryalus of chivalric legend. At last he turns home, carolling away a whole string of stornelli, a challenge to the passer-by to match his skill in song. A cloudless sky, balmy air, fireflies flashing across the path, nightingales trilling in the gloom, nature glorious as on the first day, and man too still bearing about something of the glory, because something of the faith, of his first home—

O fortunati nimium, sua si bona norint!

Should he change his simple joys for this England of ours, a land without sun or song? "Ma Eccellenza, senza sole, e senza canto, che brutto paese!"

Some of the verses are set in a graver key, and the tone they recall is not the song-sped, silver twilight of Naples and Venice, but rather the grey evening that falls silently on the ramparts of Bergamo, or the low shores of Garda, round Sirmio,—

E che lo nuovo peregrin d'amore
Punge, se ode squilla di lontano
Che paia 'l giorno pianger che si muore.

Shall we hear Love and Reason, or perhaps Jealousy, plead together?

Heaven hears my vow, I must indeed depart,
My love is dead, my will defies thy art.
And then and then I wish my words unsaid—
Till death thine only is my soul and heart.

And though Reason prevail, Love can still call on Song to pray:—

Heaven, who hast stolen him from my eyes away,
Tear from my heart even his memory.
Or give my loved one to my arms again,
Or rid me of my longing's fruitless pain.

Or to doubt :—

> Tell me true whose pain is sorest,
> Thine, or his whom thou deplorest ?
> I who stay keep house with sorrow,
> He'll a new love find to-morrow.

And at last to sneer :—

> Think you I'd call you to my side again,
> Or heed your threats of going ? You're too vain.
> You'll find elsewhere another chubby face,
> Nor will the world for me have lost its grace.

These last lines are set in a key very much affected by Italian popular poetry. In Tuscany, Signor Tigri finds a very large number of *rispetti* to be arranged under such titles as Reproaches, Anger and Jealousy, Indifference and Abandonment. Blessig, the editor of some Roman *stornelli*, heads a similar class of rhymes with the stronger words, "Abuse and Imprecation" (*Schmälung und Verwünschung*), and he notices how thoroughly southern is the feeling they embody, the possible oscillation of love between passionate adoration and savage scorn. A German is even obliged to borrow the French word *dépit* to describe what this scorn is.

Here is another specimen :—

> Not always wilt thou be fourteen :
> Not always keep thy bloom and sheen :
> Not always flaunt thy golden tresses,
> Nor always revel in caresses.

A love, melancholy yet hopeful, forms the link between these extremes. Then the verses dwell on the delays and crosses which rack the soul. "We have a hard life of it, too, we lovers : sleep all night in the streets, and wake careworn in the morning." Neighbours and busy-bodies, telltales and slanderous tongues are watchful and cruel. Song would be a relief, would the words only follow faster, and echo more truly the thoughts that burn within.

> "I would that tree could speak, that the leaves on its top were tongues : that the water which is in the sea were ink, that the earth were paper, and the grass pens. If the earth were paper and the grass pens, I would write a letter to my love. A dog were he who could read it, hear my passion, and not weep therefor."

There is some charming local colouring in these Venetian rhymes. As the Tuscan shepherd sings of summer evenings among his vine-clad hills, so the gondolier of still nights and moonlit seas. Boats instead of birds are his messengers of love, stars instead of flowers the image of the loved one's beauty. He delights in extolling his native city, the Queen of the Waves, and to picture her dowered, as of old, with the rich tribute of earth and sea.

> My Venice, wouldst thou be a bride ?
> For bridegroom take Verona.
> Thy bridesmaid be the swelling tide,
> Thy groomsman rich Ancona.

A little song which recalls the Romaic lullabies, in which the Greek mother promises her baby *pallicar* Cairo and Constantinople for his supper. Some curious *strambotti* recall, and possibly keep alive, a very old quarrel between two parishes of Venice, "the swarthy sailors" of S. Nicolo, and "the ruddy lads" of S. Pietro in Castello, commemorated in another poem in Venetian dialect of the year 1521.

Just north of Venice lies Treviso, a little town justly proud of a popular poet. In 1744, Giovanni Pozzobon, a journeyman printer, commenced the composition and publication of an almanac, enriched with sonnets, squibs, and *vers d'occasion*, written in the Trevisan dialect. It died with him, forty years after its first appearance, the annual issue having reached 80,000 copies. These poems have been often reprinted, and though the interest of most of them has passed away with that of the occasion which called them forth—a marriage or a birthday, the first mass of a Trevisan student, or the installation of a new Podestà—we can still read without ennui their cheery fluent lines, flavoured with a wit which, though homely, is never coarse. Pozzobon was honoured by the canons of Treviso with a stately funeral in the cathedral, and with a monument to preserve the memory of a poet "qui modeste vernaculo ludens carmine latè claruit et placuit."

Here is a specimen (Schieson, lxxxvii.):—

A woman-hater, must I sing of love?
  A bachelor, exalt the married state
  In "sugared sonnets"? Vainly shall I move
  My maiden muse, all vainly rack my pate.
I'm told indeed that would you really prove
  What blessings mortals still may wring from fate,
  Try marriage, taste the joys that spring from love,
  And heaven's peace thus wisely antedate.
Let Providence such joys in torrents pour,
  I'll not grudge those upon whose homes they light—
  With Christian kindliness I'll wish them more;
But while I've mother-wit to judge aright
  Of these great joys and comforts, "from my door,
  Kind heaven, keep them," pray I day and night.

The dialectic poetry of Venetia, the Milanese, and Piedmont is voluminous enough, though I doubt whether much of it can be properly called popular. So much is the work of professed litterateurs using their native patois either as a veil and excuse for revolting licentiousness (the Venetian poets are the worst offenders), or as a vehicle of satire, which hoped to be prompt and plain. With either class I have nothing to do here; but there are two names so dear to their fellow-citizens that I can hardly pass them by. Milan to Carlo Porta, Turin to Angelo Brofferio, have decreed by acclamation the amplest honours of a popular poet. During the French occupation of Lombardy, Porta hurled a volume of most telling satire against the savage insolence of the military police; against the slovenly, cringing, avaricious manners of the clergy, and the self-sufficient ignorance of the richer classes. I translate a smart

sonnet on a phrase which only the other day at Milan I heard quoted with lively abhorrence as "quelle parole *sacramentali*, 'chez nous'":—

("E daj con sto *chez nous*: ma saguanon!" &c. Poesie, p. 158.)

The deuce take your '*chez nous*.' Why, in heaven's name,
If you have left a whole Cathay behind,
Not turn at once to revel in the same,
And leave a land where nothing's to your mind?
Oh, don't mind us, you will not hear us blame
A change which both would beneficial find;
And all the names we called you when you came—
"Pigs," "fools,"—we'll gratefully blot out of mind.
And look you, we will make but one request:
When once you reach your highly favoured home,
Morn, noon, and night to curse us do your best,
So we may have at least this consolation,
That, cured by you of any itch to roam,
We've seen the last of your confounded nation.

Brofferio was the poetic champion of political, as Porta of social, reform. He was imprisoned in 1831 for his share in a revolutionary conspiracy which had no more definite aim than that of overthrowing the existing order of things. In his prison he wrote songs which were printed in broadsides, and quickly and widely circulated, and the young barrister was soon greeted as the most spirited of chansonniers and liberals. Circumstances made him the Béranger of a party, of which he would have preferred to be the Danton; but he accepted the position with a good grace, and for nearly thirty years lashed with unsparing hand persons and ideas that were not 'au niveau de la Révolution.' Compromise was his bugbear: treaties, protocols, pacts, charters, conferences, congresses, conditions, were things unclean and accursed; and the acme of treason was to talk of a "juste milieu." It was a sin to wait for time to bring about what patriotism might at least attempt. But if the scorn of the censor is any measure of the shortcomings of the censured, the indifference which Brofferio tried to combat was truly of that kind which "mercy and judgment alike disdains." Michaelmas-day, for instance, suggested this epigram:—

To good St. Michael, who with hideous rout
Cast Satan down, our folk hold holy revel;
But were St. Satan to cast Michael out,
With equal zeal to-day we'd feast the devil.

Besides his witty political ballads, and his war-songs, which were very popular in 1859, he wrote songs (a few of them translations or imitations of Béranger, to whose memory he addressed a touching farewell), some of them very pathetic, some playful even to prurience; but in all the harsh and crabbed Piedmontese dialect is handled with a skill which many Tuscan poets might envy.

Here is a poor travesty of one entitled "Trant' ani" (Canzoni, p. 109):—

AT THIRTY.

Caroline, this very morning—
  Listen, love, and make the tea—
The clock of time with dismal warning,
  Thirty strokes tolled out for me.
Thirty, have I lost in truth
The bloom, the hopes of happy youth?
Yes, I'm thirty; vanish quite
Dreams, illusions: Love, good-night!

Yes, I'm thirty, and the chance is
  Here's the turn of my campaign;
Air-built castles, love-fed fancies,
  You will ne'er return again.
Fled the rosy hours of pleasure,
Lost their perfume, spent their treasure;
Reason coughs a hint imperious—
"Friend, we're thirty—pray be serious."

Child of heavenly ancestry,
  Sorrow's twin and comforter:
Generous friend, sweet Poetry,
  My heart's best interpreter,
Hear—the Pandects cry "for shame!
Throw your Dante to the flame:
Ariosto, burn him too;
Fie, you're thirty."—Verse, adieu!

On the map I used to wander,
  Now see France, now far Bengal;
Time and money proudly squander,
  Till the world seemed all too small—
Wingless mortals, cool your fever,
Gold's the universal lever,
If you've gold at thirty, well:
If not, seek a hermit's cell.

Shams I hated, truths divine
  Long I sought, am seeking yet,
Where undimmed by age they shine
  In great Nature's pages set—
What do you mean with all this pother,
Whys, and hows, and this, and t'other?
Truth deceives her fondest lover,
No, you're thirty, throw her over.

Well, love, you'll be all the kinder,
  And I'll ask no joy but you:
Let who will seek Truth and find her:
  Dreams, Illusions, Hopes, adieu!
Come—well, what? Why these excuses,
Frowns, and scowls, and childish ruses?
One would think my hands were dirty—
I forgot—I see—I'm thirty.

A little volume of *Canti Monferrini* contains a most precious series of 100 ballads and 100 *strambotti* in the dialect of Montferrat, collected by Dr. Ferraro in the villages immediately round Acqui. The little poems are as naïve and as sweet as their Venetian compeers. Is not this redolent of a land where men and women are not ashamed of being beautiful?

A lusty lad is the love for me,
  Who drones not of work or duty;
In the shade all day he will lounge and play,
  In the pride of his youth and beauty.

There is something primitive, I had almost said Pagan, in their frankness. But we recognise it at once as the frankness of innocence; as far removed from the prurience as from the hypocrisy of chartered libertines. And here are more. An invitation:

To my vineyard, love, with me;
  To a couch of new-mown sheaves,
  Strewn with the vine's young leaves,
And the stars for our canopy.

A confession:—

Who hears thy sins, who gives them grace,
  Or priest on earth, or God above?
To priests I tell my sorry case,
  But ask my penance from my love.

A regret:—

Our youths to-day can lounge on the parade,
Not one of them can sing a serenade;
Or if they sing at all beneath the moon,
They vow that money is life's greatest boon.

I postponed my notice of the ballad poetry of Venice in order to confront it with this of Montferrat. The specimens will be studied better side by side, though I must leave it to abler hands to appraise their poetic and historic worth. But anyone possessed of the needful sympathy, and a wide acquaintance with the ballads of the other provinces of Italy, as well as those of the other Romance nations, might extract a rich treasure from the little volumes of Bernoni and Ferraro. The greatest difficulty which besets the student of ballad-poetry is to determine how far his material is really traditional, really old and untouched. Tigri and Tommaséo, two most diligent editors of Tuscan songs, confess that the most practised ear can be deceived. Suppose we take the purity and racy simplicity of the language as a test. We are dealing no doubt with compositions which borrow little from the commonplaces of culture, or the tags of memory, but besides the absurdity of affecting an unerring insight into the various spirit of a dozen difficult dialects*, this very criterion

* Books in dialects are scarce, and their contents weird and uninviting in form. Readers of Italian may amuse themselves by fitting this scrap to one of the quotations in the text:—

of language is the first to fail. "It will be noted," says Imbriani, "that the songs are scarcely ever pure and unmixed in their dialect: they contain colouring, forms and words from other idioms, and nearly always forms and words from the classical language. The fact is well known, and wants no explanation, corresponding as it does exactly to the need felt of idealizing the expression when the thought that possesses us is lofty and noble." Two of the ballads given below, "Donna Lombarda" and "La Liberatrice," are found in both collections, nor can I tell why I preferred to translate the first from the Venetian, the other from the Monferrine original, except that the one seemed to me more naïve and unstudied than the other: but I may be altogether wrong. One of the simplest and most touching of the Monferrine ballads is called "Rosina." Word for word it runs thus:—

Mother, marry me, for the summer season passeth; the cherries are ripe, ay, the large cherries. Mother, marry me, for the summer season passeth.

Mother, I would have that youth who is there in that prison. Seek not to take that youth, for they must put him to death. If they put that youth to death, I too must die. We will make one grave, we will lie there both of us: over that grave we will plant roses and flowers. All the people that pass by shall say, "How sweet a smell, it is poor Rosina, who died for love."

Here is a tragic story, also from Monferrat, told with great spirit. (*Both this and the two which follow are rendered quite literally, and follow as nearly as possible the original metre.*)

THE DELIVERER.

Wilt come away, Gianfleisa,
  Wilt come away with me?
Would you have me come, Gilardu,
  Lend me your dapple steed.
Road-ready stands my war-horse,
  And waits my love's command.
She has mounted in silence the war-horse,
  And travels through the land.
Yon castle see, Gianfleisa,
  Thither I carry thee.
Many the maids I've carried,
  Ne'er one her home did see.
A moment, good Gilardu,
  Lend me thy trusty sword.
What wouldst thou have, Gianfleisa,
  With my gold-hilted sword?
I would cut a branch, Gilardu,
  From the sun to shade my steed.
She has put her hand to the weapon,
  And pierced him to the heart.

Cosa vôl dì, o mama granda,
I meistr da bosch i tambisso tant?
Lasei fèe, lasèi an pò fè,
I fan ra chin-nha ar fijô du re.

Lie there, lie there, Gilardu,
  Cold in the cold night dews:
And I, thy love, Gianfleisa,
  Homeward will bear the news.

One Venetian version goes on to say that the heroine, there called Monchesa, on her way homewards meets her brother, and tells him she is seeking the murderer of her husband. He accuses her of the crime, which she denies. But she will not join him in his ride, she must away to Rome. There she confesses her sin, the Pope absolves her, and so "*Monchesa se salvò.*" No historical basis is even guessed at for this story, but it is remarkable that a ballad on the same subject is found in the traditional poetry of nearly every European nation. In English we may compare "The Outlandish Knight," "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight," and "May Colvin": the first in Dixon (*Percy Soc.* xvii.), the others in Child's "English and Scottish Ballads."

I take the striking ballad, "Il Rè Carlino," from the Monferrine collection. In the Venetian version (Wolf, *Volkslieder aus Venetien*, 82) it is "Conte Anzolin," who has just come in from hunting, sorely bitten by a hound: in the French (Tarbé, *Romancero de la Champagne*, p. 124) one "Jean Renaud" returns from war: in the Breton (*Vcte Hersart de la Villemarqué*, *Barzaz-Breiz*, Vol. I. p. 41) "Le Sieur Nann" has been hunting, and while drinking at an enchanted well has fallen under the glamour of the spirit, a Korrigan, who bade him choose between marriage with her, or death within three days. He scorns and derides her, and rides home. Then the ballad continues as below. The hand of death is already on the King, when his mother brings him tidings of his son's birth. Silently he passes away, and bravely and long the aged dame dissembles her own grief, lest the shock fall too rudely on his widow. But the wife's instinct is too true. She must know the worst, and find her love, though one grave enfold husband, wife, and babe.

KING CARLIN.

His mother was in the garden,
She waited for King Carlin.
  Joy, King Carlin, I give thee joy,
Thy wife has borne thee a son.
  Small joy is mine in the hearing,
Who shall ne'er see my son a man.
  Spread my bed with sheets of linen,
For e'er morrr shall be I die. . . .
She comes to his side at midnight:
The taper burns pale and low. . . .
  Tell me, you are his mother,
Why ring the bells so loud?
  Let them ring, they ring their welcome
To greet our liege's son.
  Tell me, you are his mother,
Why weep so sore your eyes?
  The steam from yon great cauldron
Draws tears from aged eyes.

Tell me, you are his mother,
Why the carpenters knock so long?
Let them knock, they make a cradle
To rock our liege's son.
Tell me, you are his mother,
Why do his henchmen mourn?
They led the King's steeds to the water,
And two they have left to drown.
Say truly, you are his mother,
To-morrow how shall we stand?
I in white, and you in a robe of grey,
As the wont is in our land.
See, who is yonder lady?
A widow, alas, so young!
Say truly, you are his mother,
What says that little one?
Let her say what she will, my daughter,
We'll to church ere the mass be done.
Tell me, you are his mother,
Why fresh the mould on the floor?
Woe is me! I can feign no longer:
Carlin in yon grave doth lie.
Oh, give me the keys of my tower,
We must seek him, my babe and I.

In the ballad "Donna Lombarda" Cav. Nigra thinks we have a true story of Rosamund, a Lombard Semiramis of the sixth century, whose astounding crimes Gibbon recounts with evident zest (c. xlv.). Alboin, King of the Lombards, had visited the brother of Cunimund, King of the Gepidæ, and by force and stratagem stolen the honour of his daughter Rosamund. A little later Cunimund himself died in battle with the Lombards, and Rosamund fell as spoil to the conquering Alboin. In a mad orgy at Verona he compelled her to pledge him in a bowl made from the skull of her father Cunimund. Her resentment was already at work. "Implacable in her enmity or inconstant in her love, the Queen of Italy had stooped from the throne to the arms of a subject, and Helmichis, the King's armour-bearer, was the secret minister of her pleasure and revenge." Him, and yet another soldier-lover, Peredeus, she induced to kill Alboin, and to fly with her to the court of Ravenna. There both heroes had to postpone their amorous claims to those of a third lover, the Exarch himself, Longinus. But in pressing a poisoned cup on the jealous Helmichis her treachery was exposed, and before he himself succumbed to its deadly power he pointed his dagger to her breast, and compelled her to drain the remainder. Here is the ghastly legend:—

DONNA LOMBARDA.

"Say, Lombard lady, wilt thou be mine?
Be mine, beloved, be mine."
"I know not how that may be, fair sir,
Another calls me wife."
"What fear, fair lady, a churl is he:
Let him die, love, let him die."

"I know not how that may be, fair sir;
How wouldst thou have him die?"
"My sire's a King, to his garden go,
Thou'lt find, love, there thou'lt find,
A noisome serpent, of poison rare;
It must die, love, it must die.
Thou shalt leave his body, and take his head,
In a mortar crush it fine;
In a beaker mix the deadly drug,
And fill with ruddy wine.
Thy lord shall come to his home again,
With burning thirst forespent."
"Wine, Lombard lady, a drink I crave,
A drink of rare old wine.
See, Lombard lady, what ails the cup,
Why dark and troubled the wine?"
"Good my lord, 'twas last night's thunder-stroke
Has troubled your good wine."
"Drink, Lombard lady, a health to the King;
Drink deep, lady, drink first."
"I know not how that may be, my lord;
No thirst have I, no thirst."
"By my own good sword at my side, lady,
Drink it thou shalt, I swear."
"Then pledge me a health to the King of France:
An I drink thereof, I die."
The Lombard lady but sipped the cup;
Pale and more pale she grew.
Another sip, and to earth she fell:
Her last breath there she drew.
Ill speed the wives that keep not well
Their troth unto their lords.

Scarcely in France has the tyranny of great names been so galling as in Italy. Let an author try to be gay, he was reminded how far short he fell of the sprightly grace of Ariosto; he would be grave, and the shade of Dante was invoked to rebuke his presumption. In England we are more tolerant. We are only too glad to be moved and exalted, to be refreshed and cheered by anyone who possesses the requisite skill. We do not rise at once from the perusal of a pleasing lyric in the pages of a magazine to declaim Shelley's "Skylark," nor do we damn Charles I. and Irving with an allusion to Hamlet and Kean. Harassed by such petulant criticism, later Italian writers have taken Montrond's dictum *au grand sérieux*, and practised it with so much success that Italian literature is the last place in which we need look for an image of the Italian character. And so among foreigners it has fallen into neglect. However, if there is any lover of Italy less intent on playing the critic than on being stirred and delighted, whose literary digestion is robust enough to assimilate thoughts on love and youth unspiced with Petrarchist subtleties, presented in words which have not passed through the Cruscan sieve, he may still find a wide and varied feast in the popular poetry of the Italian dialects.

Thoughts of a Country Critic.

I WONDER what were the feelings of an old-fashioned Derbyshire gentleman some three hundred years ago when the Countess of Devonshire had brought down a lot of outlandish artists and masons to build Hardwicke Hall, and instead of the good old gables and buttresses of his youth arose classical pilasters and entablatures, a new and wonderful birth of heathen art to supplant the dull but sufficient Gothic under which he and his fathers had lived for a couple of centuries.

I think I have some idea: for I have been a humble lover of art from my boyhood, and till lately fancied that I knew some little of what was going on in that world. But some recent flashes of light have told me that I have been asleep, I know not how long, and am in danger of finding myself after all no better than a Rip Van Winkle.

Let me explain. I live in a market town in the North Midland counties, five hours from London. We are not wholly Bœotian. We take in the *Saturday Review* and the *Pall Mall Budget*, and see the *Quarterly Review* and an occasional number of the *Fortnightly* and *Contemporary*. I myself travelled in Italy some years ago. I used to take in the *Art Journal*. I have read Ruskin, have never lost an opportunity of seeing good pictures, and I am, I hope, as open to new impressions as I was in 1850. We are, I repeat, not wholly Bœotian; but the mere fact of our latitude makes us provincial; and our brightest rays of enlightenment come rather from Manchester than from London. Yet we do not fail, once at least in two or three years, to visit the Royal Academy and the National Gallery, and any exhibitions of pictures which may be open when our visits to town take place, and instruct ourselves as well as we may in the progress of the art and art-literature now going on in the busier world. But all my ideas have been upset by the discovery that the present and future of English art are wholly unlike what I had imagined.

Some months ago, at one of those social meetings in which the country still preserves a kindliness of neighbourly intercourse which is lost to the town, there appeared a young Oxonian, the nephew of our excellent Rector, a recent candidate for honours, and lately elected Fellow of his College. It was interesting to meet a young man of promise, and, for his years, of some reputation; and he was cordially received by the company. After dinner the conversation (leaving for a while our favourite local topics) turned upon the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. I had visited it in the month of May, and had been glad to see in it evidence that the vigour of English art was still unimpaired, in spite of the influence

of præ-Raphaelitism now happily passed away, and of a too dominant French sentimentalism. It is true that a sense of *staleness* had sometimes interfered with my enjoyment, as I saw the same painters executing the same feats which they have executed for goodness knows how many years past. Yet I found plenty to praise, and just cause for congratulating a country which had before it so good a hope of a progressive school of art. I was enumerating some of the pictures of the year which had seemed to me specially worthy of remark, and amongst others a painting by a Mr. Moore which had puzzled me; a single figure without light or shade, or any particular colour; something like a tinted bas-relief. I now know that Mr. Moore is one of our great ones; but then I used his name ignorantly. My young friend, who had been silent during dinner, pricked up his ears at the name, and said, in a tone which, if not disrespectful, was not deferential, "You do not appear to have noticed the best thing in last year's Exhibition—the great Greek procession, by the same painter." Now I *had* noticed that picture, and spent some time before it, and marked it with a cross in my Catalogue. I had expressed my surprise to the friend who was with me at the time (not a judge of painting himself) that such a picture should have been admitted at all. It had seemed to me a dull and flat composition in sad green and grey, a dead echo of an unreal past.

"Ah!" broke in my young friend, with a regretful air, "and what have we at best but an echo? There is no art-life in this century; we can but try and feel the past, and make it live again as we best may. Look at Jones! look at Morris! what do they do but catch a spark from the ages which had a life? The sentiment of that picture is not unreal; it is *refracted*, if you will. The poetry of it is a poetry of situation, which none but a delicate culture can taste. There is a world of passion in that situation, if you can but feel it."

"A situation," I said; "but what a situation!"

"Oh, pardon me; I do not mean by a situation the mere transcript of a fact; it is the transcript of a sentiment. Look at the Greeks! No incident too slight, too fleeting, to be the casket of an imperishable thought."

Here he turned away from me to some ladies who were of the company, ladies who have lately come into our neighbourhood, and whose unconventional behaviour, dress, and conversation furnish much matter for *les disettes* of a country town. As far as I can hazard a guess, their aim is to reconcile the thirteenth with the eighteenth century; and our sweet Phyllises and Phidyles, always ready to learn, are dropping the quaint skirts and ribbons which made them as pretty as Dresden china in the Clarissa period of a few years ago, and are becoming mediæval Florentines, sweeping through the aisle on Sunday mornings like Laura or Beatrice at a fancy ball.

I could find no place for myself in this conversation; the names were unfamiliar. I had been visiting picture galleries with my eyes shut, it seems

—Blake, Stothard, Watts, Morris, Rossetti, Corot, Daubigny, Jones and Jones, and again Jones. I knew the names of these painters to be sure, but had looked upon most of them as artists who had more sentiment or quaintness than knowledge and power. Then the terms they used—tonality, mood-landscape, exquisite passion, splendour of experience, pulsations of consciousness—and adjectives: intimate, precious, sharp, swift, resonant, sweet. "Well," I thought, "I am an old fogy, but not too old to learn; and I will find out whatever I can of these lean kine who are to eat up our John Bull and all he has believed in hitherto, and see whether the leanness is theirs or mine; and meantime I will boldly ask this young *précieux* how I can obtain access to the studios in which these painters work, and to the literature in which their principles are set down."

"Are you coming up to town any time in the next ten days?" he said (as if I were in the habit of running up and down once a week or so); "I will take you to all the studios. I know all these fellows; and you should read the *Academy* and the *Portfolio*; the *Academy* is the best thing there is. I write in it myself sometimes. Good night."

A week after this conversation I found myself in Oxford with my new acquaintance Mr. W. The young gentleman had insisted on my accompanying him to Oxford and thence to London; and I retain so pleasant a recollection of his hospitality that I am unwilling to criticise himself or his tastes, or even to call in question the furniture of his rooms, to which I had looked forward as a probable solution of the problems which his conversation continually suggested. I must confess that what I saw amazed me. Imagine an old set of panelled rooms dating, I dare say, from 1700. I remembered them as occupied by a friend of my own about thirty years ago: they were then painted or grained a cheerful light oak colour. Mr. W. had had the panels painted tea-green. His sofas and chairs were covered with yellow chintz. Persian rugs lay in all directions about the room—the floor was covered with China matting. The curtains were of a kind of snuff-coloured green. The furniture, spindle-legged mahogany tables, odd round looking-glasses like those one sees in bedrooms, and carved book-cases with glass fronts such as I remember in my grandmother's house some forty years past. The fireplace was full of Gothic or semi-Gothic blue-and-white tiles, with an old-fashioned brass fender. In the upper lights of the windows were some allegorical subjects in white and yellow—the Four Seasons, I think—in an extreme mediæval style. It was all very refined and pretty, but what a jumble! Here was eclecticism with a vengeance—Hafiz on the floor, Queen Anne on the walls, Chaucer in the windows, glass from the Grand Canal, mirrors Louis Quatorze, chairs and tables which might have stood in Clarissa's parlour. And when I came to look more closely at the pictures—for you may read a man's mind as well by his pictures as by his books—I was more confounded than ever. Here was a writhing, sweeping mass of black and white, a photograph from Blake. Here an extraordinary transparent white figure standing amongst azaleas by an

enormous China pot.—"Morgiana?" I asked myself. Then there were two little water-colours, one representing half an acre of grass land with three rabbits and the top of a shed; and as its pendant half an acre of town rubbish with the back of a red brick house, and half a dozen cats on the tiles. Then a dark red lady with her hair, also red, twisted east, and her gown twisted west, almond eyes, her face like the ace of spades and her mouth like the ace of hearts—a sort of grisaille drawing without distance or perspective, in which the patterns of the clothes were more conspicuous than the features. Landscapes: one in oil, painted, I should say, with thumb and fingers—a sullen pool and a gnarled oak—green, that made one's teeth *creak* to look at it; another, a cold rushy moor, blown by the wind, with a stunted thorn and a bit of grey distance, lovely in sentiment, but dreary and unhappy more than the world really is. Then a misty-moisty row of poplars near a tank—the sky represented by blots of white paint, the trees by blots of grey—and in the midst of this collection of oddities, lo! a facsimile of one of Lionardo's drawings, an Albert Dürer engraving, and a bit of early Florentine painting. I felt like a geologist amongst a heap of unsorted specimens, searching in vain for a central thought to bind all these contraries together.

I was tired with my journey, and asked leave to rest an hour in my host's luxurious armchair while he went out on some business. I fell into a sort of waking doze, in which the objects around me seemed gradually to harmonise into something like a tune in a minor key. I felt the charm of grace and refinement. This rococo collection had after all some unity. I seemed to find the key to it in the half-toned grey-green atmosphere which pervaded all. No bright colour was admitted, except here and there a sunlight patch on a Persian carpet. All the life represented had something of incompleteness or decay. There was no midday heat or splendour or strength. The yellow allegories in the windows were worn and wasted; the green of the walls was that of a *hortus siccus*; the men and women in the drawings were all sick and sorry. The sadness of tone in all this Castle of Indolence so oppressed me that I got up and leant out of the window, and gazed out upon bright chestnut trees in full leaf, rich buttercups in Christchurch meadow, boys in coloured flannels talking and laughing on their way to the boats, and all the sights and sounds of healthy happy midsummer life.

I came back from London dazed and dazzled as if I had been couched for cataract. I have hardly yet dared to remove the bandages. My eclectic friend taught me to see what my rheumy eyes had hitherto passed over unnoted. He led me to avious places of the Pierides, and bade me look into unsullied fountains in which I had seen before nothing but quaintness and conceit. Thus was my visual ray cleansed. In humility I received the sacred books and newspapers of his sect, and though not yet enlightened, I hope I may call myself a catechumen.

Let me first describe how this school appeared to me as it was gradually revealed to me through books and pictures and conversation;

then I may perhaps go on to find some guiding principle by which to judge of it.

Eclecticism is a threadbare word; for everything nowadays is eclectic, from Mr. Disraeli's Cabinet downwards. It is even vulgar to be eclectic; but you cannot escape altogether the habit of the age in which you live; and so these purists are, in spite of themselves, more eclectic than their neighbours; and pick out from all styles and periods what is in accordance with their mood. And this is very various. I find them admiring and imitating early Italian art, modern French, eighteenth century of the date of Queen Anne, and down to the threshold of the nineteenth, old English of the period of Chaucer, Greek idyllic, Roman decadence. What is their common characteristic? Hear it in their own catch-words—what they relish is refinement, delicacy, subtlety of thought, colour and form, and a certain yearning of passion. They admire and imitate the dawn or decline of the great schools; not the full sunshine—they have no eyes for Titian, but they rave about Botticelli. They make much more of Stothard than of Reynolds; of Blake than of Byron. And this is not merely the modern fashion of doing justice to neglected genius. It is that the sentiment of these artists attracts them by its refinement, and perhaps by its want of strength and colour. There is a fine flower of refinement which only springs up here and there out of a rich soil in Greece, Italy, or France, very rarely in Rome, England, or Germany. It has not robustness enough to be the groundwork of a great school. To take illustrations for different arts, I would instance Chopin for music; Flaxman for sculpture; for poetry, the Italians whom Mr. Rossetti imitates, as artists who had in their different ways this quality; a distinction of sentiment the characteristic of which is refinement and an undefined longing. For a special instance I cannot take a better than Botticelli, who is so completely their favourite painter that I may be pardoned or saying a word about him. There is a half-expressed longing and *fineness* of sentiment in Botticelli's painting which is unlike anything else except the poetry of which Dante's *Vita Nuova* is the highest example. Giotto, Fra Angelico, almost anyone else you please, are straightforward and matter-of-fact in comparison with him. Perhaps one may say that there is a similar difference between Raphael and Andrea del Sarto, or between Titian and Bellini. This refined sentiment, not unknown to Perugino and his pupils, but expressed by them in a more happy, sunshiny temper, is the quality which our modern school most admires. Mr. Pater, in his book on the Renaissance, says it is rebellion against dogma and the worship of the body that inspires the keen-souled Cinquecentists. No! I say; go to Titian and Veronese if you wish to see the gorgeous happy pagan life and the glory of the worship of the body. In Botticelli we have not the splendid health of the Roman and Venetian painters; but a pale skin, soft blue lines in the throat, long slender limbs, languid eyes, pouting lips—a sad allegory of life, a melancholy Virgin; not Raphael's happy Mother; not Bellini's holy Annunziata; not Titian's

triumphant Assunta. The two sides of Botticelli's character are typified by two of his pictures, "Mars and Venus," at Berlin; and the "Assumption of the Virgin," which I saw at Burlington House last year. The one shows his tender longing after the Greek life; the other, his tender Piagnone piety. And in both there is something morbid. It is not the art which springs from happiness and health; it loves decay and the sense of the nearness of death. In Botticelli's pictures this is so constantly present that it becomes an affectation. "Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile"—and so Mr. Rossetti (of whom I speak in all reverence as an idealist and as a painter) paints throats which are all but *goitres*, and impossible rosebud lips; and Mr. Burne Jones lengthens out the limbs of his doleful virgins, and wraps them round with clinging garments of russet hue. Oh, gardens of the Hesperides! not such as these were the

> daughters three
> That sing about the golden tree,

but rich and ripe and full of flesh, such as Giorgione saw; such as still rain influence from behind dark altars or in Florentine galleries, the work of Titian and Tintoret and Raphael.

But I am rhapsodising: and I am called back to a difficulty by two great names, perhaps the greatest; Lionardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo, both great idealists, and great masters of sentiment; and that generally a sentiment of melancholy. Nothing in Mr. Pater's "Siren-songs" is more tuneful than his description of Lionardo's "Belle Joconde." He understands Lionardo as far as he can be understood at this distance of time, and from the fragments of his work which exist. But Lionardo is a giant among giants. His little finger is thicker than Botticelli's loins; what may be affectation in the one is idealism in the other. I would rather restore to art Lionardo's statue of Pope Julius than all the lost works of the great Masters. That Lionardo in his long and busy life produced so little is a reproach to the acre-painters of Venice, though such great names are among them. There is no affectation in Lionardo as there is perhaps in Luini. Lionardo is gloomy, melancholy, and tenderly sentimental, but he is too great to be affected, though intense study sometimes makes his work artificial. So, too, Michael Angelo—a smaller artist working in his spirit might become affected; but the sense of power in him transcends all affectation, as it does in Shakespeare. Let our moderns get the power of Lionardo and Michael Angelo, or even of Botticelli, and we will not quarrel with their mannerisms. Meanwhile, let them learn to be simple. "Simple," I hear some one say, "why simplicity is the one thing we love." Not so—this is not a genuine simplicity; it is the simplicity of fastidiousness. Simplicity is the heritage of health, not the acquisition of a taste which dislikes vulgarity. You cannot become simple by pruning and paring, by turning away from this and that, by calling the midday sunshine a glare, and finding fault with grass and flowers for being too bright in colour. Be healthy first of all,

whether your powers are small or great. Study Nature in her healthy forms, not in her decay. You cannot build a school on the foundations of tender regret and choice sentiment. A living school grows because it lives, and does not choose and settle beforehand how its heart shall beat, or count its pulses by the watch. Refinement and sensibility are graces, not virtues, and they may be cultivated till they become sickly. They are essential to the poetic or shaping spirit, but they are not its only essentials; and one of the most important of all is health.

Let me take (without offence, I hope) three modern instances. First, Mr. Morris's decorative work, which interprets and is interpreted by his poetry—for of his painting I cannot speak, not having had enough opportunity of seeing it—(why won't these artists exhibit? what harm would it do them or their paintings to be looked at by vulgar people? and vulgar people might learn something from them, as I hope they learn from the pictures in the National Gallery). Mr. Morris, then, like the others of his school, picks like a chiffonnier here and there whatever is tender and sentimental. He began with mediæval asceticism—now he has gone on to a strange Greek Gothic Eastern gorgeousness, of which the first rule is that it should not be commonplace. But excellent as are the details, it is all repetition or echo; only there is something of his own in the treatment, and so far he is in harmony with the old Renaissance. These old masters accepted the classical detail, and to some extent the classical rules. But with what a strong grasp did they lay hold on them, and make them their own! To return to our lackadaisical artists. The same refining sensibility is shown in their treatment of nature. They do not work in the spirit of Turner or Gainsborough, or even Constable, whom the French have taught them to admire. I do not know where you will find more perfect refinement than in the works of Mr. F. Walker and Mr. Mason, whose loss to art all its lovers must deplore. But are their subjects quite worthy of them? Mr. Walker paints a team of oxen on a Somersetshire hill-side, a child and a lamb under an apple-tree, a border of delicately painted flowers, as light and suggestive and perfect as Schumann's "Kinderscenen," or Blake's "Songs of Innocence." Mr. Mason's Arcadia, where is it? not this side of Parthenope. With what exquisite care and labour he worked may be learnt from his repeated studies of the same subject under different skies and in different moods. But the subjects are disappointing—a drying yard with a blue gown hanging up, a girl driving a calf, a horseman astray on a moor. His highest flight of fancy is the lovely dance of girls by the sea-side, or the return of the mowers under the moon. He was the Theocritus of English painting; but with such power and such fineness he might have risen above the idyl. What I complain of is that, with higher pretensions than those of other painters, this school stops short of completeness for very fineness and fastidiousness: they have not faith enough to risk a failure by trying what may be too hard for them.

But I cannot leave these artists without paying the tribute of admira-

tion for their distinctive excellencies. They see, it is true, only the grave and pensive side of nature; but that aspect which they represent is perfectly represented and in genuine sympathy with its beauty. I suppose the same is true of Corot and the other grey French painters whom they all admire as suggesting a dreamy wistfulness, and not obtruding any pedantic or scientific knowledge; but I cannot forgive these men for banishing the sun from the sky and making nature mourn in sober colours. Nature has her bright and gaudy side as well as her mists and moonshine, and Art has as much to do with thankfulness as with regret—nay, much more. But now I seem to hear them calling to their fellows (and the voice is the voice of Mr. Burne Jones and the lyre is twanged by the skilled fingers and tuned by the delicate ear of Mr. Swinburne), "Give us fruits, but let them be bruised and overripe. Bind garlands for us, but of faded roses. Sing us songs, but with the lesser Third—we will have no light but sunset, no hope but of the grave, no love but of that which is gone as we grasp it, no faith but in a frail and brittle beauty."

It seems we are in the midst of a Renaissance. Who shall read us the signs of the times? Why did we not know of this great new birth? why do we still feel half inclined to jest about it? Its professors are in earnest, or mean to be; they speak in esoteric language with all the certainty of a school, and carry out principles unflinchingly. Full of sadness at the smokiness and grime, material and spiritual, of their age, they love to remember the past ages, and—simple souls!—they turn away their eyes lest they behold vulgarity, and let the restful influence of the past flow upon them. To see nothing but with cleansed eyes; to choose out what is best and imitate it; this is how they mean to conduct their Renaissance.

Mr. Pater's book on the Renaissance may, I suppose, be taken as an exposition of the principles of the school of art to which he belongs. He speaks, at any rate, as with authority, and his book is didactic as well as historical. But to my mind his view of the Italian Renaissance, though full of insight, and seizing very truly several aspects of that period, mistakes its central principle. Mr. Pater would have us believe that the artists of the fifteenth century were melancholy sentimentalists and dreamers of sad dreams, as sick of the middle ages as a converted Gothicist, and with no sure hope of anything; only determined to rebel against dominant stupidity and vulgarity. I believe them, on the contrary, to have been young and hopeful reformers, glorying in their youth, and joyfully accepting the guidance of the newly-found models of beauty. The languid or pedantic archæologist of to-day cannot conceive the joy which was felt in Rome as one by one the forgotten works of great writers came out from their monkish graveclothes, and the heaped-up soil yielded its treasures, and Lysippus and Praxiteles became a reality from a name. There never was a time when buoyant hope had more the ascendant. The spirit of the age had in it more of Lorenzo the Magnificent than of Lionardo da Vinci; more of Rabelais than of Erasmus. It is better symbolised by the joyful certainty of Raphael than by Michael Angelo's doubting melancholy.

There is a true and a false Renaissance; just as every language has a true and a false growth, a natural and a learned period. Each seeks for the spirit of the antique; but the one lives, and the other studies. The one thankfully makes use of former models and methods as a means of new and original creation; the other lays up its talent in a napkin, and sadly despairs, and aims at nothing but imitation. One dares whilst the other doubts. What a splendid growth is Cinquecento architecture; and how unlike Cinquecento architecture is that of the school whose highest aim is to copy accurately a chimney-piece, or adapt a house from one of the date of Queen Anne. By all means copy Queen Anne houses if you can do no better, but don't imagine that it is high art to do so; still less accuse of vulgarity those who risk failure by attempting a higher flight. Sir G. G. Scott's idea of taking a fresh departure from Gothic of the thirteenth century is a good and true one, if only it could have come naturally and not by thinking; and if, like Imlac, he and his followers have not flown far, they share with that philosopher the credit of having at least tried to move. What they (like Imlac) want is the power to move their learned wings, and power is not born of learning; though learning is not to be despised, and is of course an essential of Renaissance.

I sympathise indeed with the weariness which comes with the thought of *this* Renaissance or Gothic Revival, as it used to be called. The first revival began with the Romantic school, Fouqué and Scott and the Eglinton Tournament and sham castles, and the Gothic of Blore and Wilkins; then came Pugin and Ruskin, who had the root of the matter in them: but the one "could only be expressed in cathedrals"; and the other is still our teacher, but who shall read him aright? Full of the letter of Ruskin, but with too little of his spirit, came the præ-Raphaelites and other makers of ugly things (the Uglicists, may we call them?), setting up the symbols of their faith in patterns of striped brick and stone, particoloured pictures, and crooked furniture fit neither to look at nor to use. Now we have, on the one hand, our sentimental school and a revival of eighteenth-century friezes and cornices, mixed with sham mediævalism and sham paganism; and, on the other, Ritualism—that strange unintelligible jumble of modern coxcombry and ancient religion misunderstood and travestied. This is what our Renaissance has brought us, instead of the glories (blasphemed by Mr. Ruskin) of the fifteenth century. For Hatfield and Hardwicke we have the Houses of Parliament and the Albert Memorial. I think we need not be proud of our nineteenth-century Renaissance until it becomes more—what do they call it?—*naïf*. I believe it is a German word.

Our sentimental school abjure this bastard Renaissance, but they are of it notwithstanding, for they have for ideas of their own an echo of past ideas. Learning, as I said, is an essential of a Renaissance; but as the note of a true Renaissance is faith and of a false Renaissance criticism —or, shall I say, hope of the one, and regret of the other?—there is more life in honest effort which looks forward at the risk of vulgarity, than in

sentiment which analyses the present and tries to reproduce the past. Like all modern artists, they do not realise that what made the art of the great centuries was its spirit not its form, the growth of new thought which clothed itself in the forms of the past. Till that thought arises again I am content to believe that the houses and churches built by the one school are better than those built by the other, and heartily to admire for all its strangeness the wall papers and chintzes and tiles designed by Messrs. Morris and their fellows; but I cannot consent to take them as the only artists who are to save us from the Philistines, or their principles as having the hope of the future in them.

After all, I have not made out yet what these principles are. But as far as I can understand this school, it is based on fineness of sentiment rather than on knowledge, and the keynote of this sentiment is longing "regret for the absent" as Theocritus says, whether it be regret for a past life or yearning for a distant ideal, or the less spiritual pains which consume Sicilian and Florentine lovers. This longing takes now-a-days the form of regret, forced upon it by the vulgarity of the nineteenth century: for, seeing how vulgar the present is, it has no hope in the future. Regretfulness and disgust of modern commonplace has a double result. In the first place it leads to the state of mind which says "the world is full of trouble and there is no certainty of anything else to come. It is better to enjoy what we have, or at least to give up preaching and divorce morality from art; to live the most perfect life in the moment, which is all that we can grasp;" then comes in the sensuousness and body-worship which to some extent is characteristic of the school; something of the spirit of the later Anthology; a "Sehnsucht" to which all objects are lawful; such a spirit as inspires Mr. Pater's book and is put into more articulate form by Mr. Swinburne; the spirit which says alternately, "Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," and "Let us fall in love with death, for to-morrow we die." In the second place it leads to the rejection of whole periods and phases of art and nature—the nineteenth century to begin with—and then all prosperous material periods and countries. Nothing can be given to art by ancient Roman, by Flemish, barbarian, American life. Study, they say, those nations and generations which thought *finely*; and from those pick out all that is most quaint and furthest from commonplace. Lovers of art must have a taste for olives and caviare. And in looking at nature never forget that the smell of death is in all her sweetness, and that the grey decay of her softer moods more truly expresses her to the feeling mind than the garish gold of summer.

I think that I have said enough to indicate the tendency of this school. These artists have taught me so much, and I owe them so much thanks for what they have taught me, that I am almost converted to believe that they have the key of the future; and certainly no other school can do more than fumble at the door. But they want faith and hope—and so with all their sense of beauty and all their technical skill, they fail in power of creation. Hopeless is thankless; and thankless art

has no future. They remain fruitless because faithless; Atys-priests of beauty, impotent to add to the life of Art: because they believe in death rather than in life. And when I feel this, their pretensions to infallibility rather gall me. The last time I saw my Oxford friend was in Bond Street—he had been looking at exhibitions black and white, and blue and green, and was full of the "sweetness" of his own friends and the worthlessness of everything else. I listened for a while to his jargoning, and then left him and turned into the National Gallery; and there sat down before a Titian and a Turner, and clean forgot all about him and his friends and their principles.

Bennet Langton.

It is not the portrait of Johnson only that Boswell has drawn for us. To most men Garrick and Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and even Goldsmith are known only so far as they appear in the pages of the *Life*. Great though these men were, no one of them was so fortunate as to find an artist so skilled in painting him, that his likeness, though made the very centre of the picture, stands out to us half so clear as it shows when given in the very background of Boswell's wide canvas. By the side of their great figures are sketched in, with no weaker a hand, a host of lesser men. Had he not written, their very names would long ago have passed away, but now the men themselves live for us. The thought arises, not what they, but what we should have lost if they had missed their *vates sacer*. It is the living, not the dead who are to be pitied when the good of a bygone age are left overwhelmed and unknown in the long night of which the Latin poet sings. What reader of Boswell does not almost feel that he would have had one friend less in the world had he never had his delightful pages to teach him the worth of the gentle Bennet Langton? Dear to us as are so many of the men who loved Johnson and whom Johnson loved, dear to us as is Goldsmith, dear to us as is the 'dear Knight of Plympton' himself, certainly not less dear is the tall Lincolnshire squire who, as a mere lad, came to London chiefly in the hope of getting introduced to the author of the *Rambler*, and who, more than thirty years later, came up once more to tend his friend when the grand old man knew at last that that death which he had so long dreaded from afar was now close upon him and must be faced. Their long friendship had been but once broken. Happily, ten years or so before it was broken for ever it had been made whole again.

Boswell himself does not describe Bennet Langton's person, nor could he well have done so, as Langton was living when the *Life* was published. Miss Hawkins, however, in her *Memoirs* has happily supplied the deficiency. She says, "Oh! that we could sketch him with his mild countenance, his elegant features, and his sweet smile, sitting with one leg twisted round the other as if fearing to occupy more space than was equitable; his person inclining forward, as if wanting strength to support his height, and his arms crossed over his bosom, or his hands locked together on his knee; his oblong gold-mounted snuff-box, taken from the waistcoat pocket opposite his hand, and either remaining between his fingers or set by him on the table, but which was never used but when his mind was occupied in conversation; so soon as conversation began the box was produced." We find another description of him given by Mr. Best, in his *Personal and Literary Memorials*:—"He was a very tall, meagre, long-visaged

man, much resembling a stork standing on one leg near the shore, in Raphael's cartoon of the Miraculous Draught of Fishes. His manners were, in the highest degree, polished; his conversation mild, agreeable, and always pleasing." Johnson, in a letter to Langton's tutor at Trinity College, Oxford, thus pleasantly alludes to his great height: "I see your pupil sometimes; his mind is as exalted as his stature. I am half afraid of him; but he is no less amiable than formidable." The nickname of Lanky that he gave him was, no doubt, not merely, like Sherry or Goldy, an abbreviation of a name; it was also a hit at his friend's person. Topham Beauclerk's wife also had her fling at his height. In *Boswelliana* we read, "Lady Di Beauclerk told me that Langton had never been to see her since she came to Richmond, his head was so full of the militia and Greek. 'Why,' said I, 'madam, he is of such a length; he is awkward, and not easily moved.' 'But,' said she, 'if he had laid himself at his length, his feet had been in London and his head might have been here *eodem die*.'" His sons were not unworthy of their father, and "used," as we read in Miss Hawkins' *Memoirs*, "to amuse the good people of Paris by raising their arms to let them pass."

"Johnson," as Boswell tells us, "was not the less ready to love Mr. Langton for his being of a very ancient family; for I have heard him say with pleasure, 'Langton, Sir, has a grant of a warren from Henry II., and Cardinal Stephen Langton in King John's reign was of this family.'" His grandfather had known Lord Chief Justice Hale, and had kept a note of a conversation in which "that great man told him that for two years after he came to the Inn of Court he studied sixteen hours a day; however, by this intense application he almost brought himself to his grave, though he were of a very strong constitution, and after reduced himself to eight hours." His father, "old Mr. Langton, was a high and steady Tory, yet attached to the present Royal Family. Johnson said of him, Sir, you will seldom see such a gentleman, such are his stores of literature, such his knowledge in divinity, and such his exemplary life; and, Sir, he has no grimace, no gesticulation, no bursts of admiration on trivial occasions; he never embraces you with an overacted cordiality." Yet at another time he said of him, "He never clarified his notions by filtrating them through other minds. He had a canal upon his estate, where at one place the bank was too low. 'I dug the canal deeper, said he.'" The word canal, in Johnson's time, we may remark, was generally applied to an ornamental sheet of water. Old Mr. and Mrs. Langton had both opposed sitting for their pictures. When Johnson, who thought it right that each generation of a family should have its portraits taken, heard of this, he exclaimed, "Sir, among the anfractuosities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a superstitious reluctance to sit for a picture." The old gentleman, though later on he suspected that Johnson was at heart a Papist, had offered him a living of considerable value in Lincolnshire if he were inclined to take orders. Happily for the world, perhaps not unhappily for the parish, Johnson declined. Of Peregrine

Langton, Bennet's uncle, who Johnson says "was one of those whom I loved at once by instinct and by reason," and of his admirable economy, we have an interesting account from the pen of the nephew himself. "He had an annuity for life of 200*l.* per annum. His family consisted of a sister, who paid him 18*l.* annually for her board, and a niece. The servants were two maids, and two men in livery. His common way of living at his table was three or four dishes; the appurtenances to his table were neat and handsome; he frequently entertained company at dinner, and then his table was well served with as many dishes as were usual at the tables of the other gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His own appearance as to clothes was genteelly neat and plain. He had always a post-chaise, and kept three horses. Some money he put into the stocks; at his death the sum he had there amounted to 150*l.*" "His art of life certainly deserves to be known and studied" as much now as when Johnson wrote.

Such was the family of the tall Lincolnshire lad who, at the age of seventeen or thereabouts, full of admiration for the *Rambler*, which had just been brought to an end, eagerly sought an introduction to its author. He by good luck made the acquaintance of Robert Levett, "the practiser in physic," the man "obscurely wise and coarsely kind," who introduced him to Johnson. "Mr. Langton was exceedingly surprised when the sage first appeared. He had not received the smallest intimation of his figure, dress, or manner. From perusing his writings, he fancied he should see a decent, well-dressed, in short, a remarkably decorous philosopher. Instead of which, down from his bed-chamber about noon, came, as newly risen, a huge uncouth figure, with a little dark wig which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loose about him. But his conversation was so rich, so animated, and so forcible, and his religious and political notions so congenial with those in which Mr. Langton had been educated, that he conceived for him that veneration and attachment which he ever preserved." Johnson took no less pleasure in Langton's company. He described him as one of those men "to whom Nature does not spread her volumes or utter her voices in vain," "as a friend at once cheerful and serious," while rising yet higher, "with a warm vehemence of affectionate regard, he exclaimed, 'The earth does not bear a worthier man then Bennet Langton.'" On another occasion he said, "I know not who will go to Heaven if Langton does not. Sir, I could almost say, *Sit anima mea cum Langtono.*"

Miss Reynolds, in her *Anecdotes*, tells us, "I shall never forget the excellent character he drew of his friend Mr. Langton, nor with what energy, what fond delight, he expatiated in his praise, giving him every excellence that nature could bestow, and every perfection that humanity could acquire." Boswell, too, describes "our worthy friend,"—for that is Langton's Homeric epithet in the modern Odyssey—as "a gentleman eminent not only for worth and learning, but for an inexhaustible fund of entertaining conversation."

In a note to the *Life* he quotes one of his stories. "An honest carpenter," we read, "after giving some anecdote in Langton's presence of the ill-treatment which he had received from a clergyman's wife, who was a noted termagant, and whom he accused of unjust dealing in some transaction with him, added, 'I took care to let her know what I thought of her;' and being asked, 'What did you say?' answered, 'I told her she was a scoundrel.'" In *Boswelliana* we find recorded two or three anecdotes that Langton told of Johnson that Boswell has not we believe worked up into the *Life*. "A certain young clergyman," we read, "used to come about Dr. Johnson. The Doctor said it vexed him to be in his company—his ignorance was so hopeless. 'Sir,' said Mr. Langton, 'his coming about you shows he wishes to help his ignorance.' 'Sir,' said the Doctor, 'his ignorance is so great I am afraid to show him the bottom of it.'" Langton also told Boswell how "Mr. Johnson used to laugh at a passage in *Carte's Life of the Duke of Ormond*," where he gravely observes, "that he was always in full dress when he went to court; too many being in the practice of going thither with double lapells." To Langton, Johnson had once said, "Sir, had Wilkes's mob prevailed against Government, this nation had died of phthiriasis." Boswell suggests that *morbus pediculosus* as being better known, would strike more, and adds *lousy disease* may be put in a parenthesis. Johnson, when insisting one day "that the value of every story depends on its being true," said, "Langton used to think a story a story, till I showed him that truth was essential to it."

He was endeared to Johnson by his Greek scarcely less than by his ancient lineage, his piety, his entertaining conversation, and his worth. He was the man who had read Clenardus's *Greek Grammar*. "Why, Sir," said Johnson, "who is there in this town who knows anything of Clenardus but you and I?" He had learnt by heart the Epistle of St. Basil. "Sir," said Johnson, "I never made such an effort to attain Greek." It was at his house that Johnson spent an evening with the Rev. Dr. Parr, when "he was much pleased with the conversation of that learned gentleman." "He has invited," so Johnson writes to Boswell, "Nicolaida, the learned Greek, to visit him at his house in Lincolnshire." When he gets somewhat embarrassed in his circumstances, Johnson, though close on the end of his life, and nigh worn out with illness, writes to him, "I am a little angry at you for not keeping minutes of your own *acceptum et expensum*, and think a little time might be spared from Aristophanes for the *res familiares*." To him Johnson, now on his death-bed, gave the translations into Latin verse that he had made of Greek epigrams during the sleepless nights of his last illness. His name is not to be found to the celebrated round robin which Burke drew up, and that the company gathered round Sir Joshua Reynolds's table signed. "Joe Warton, a scholar by profession, might be such a fool" as to put his hand to a petition that Goldsmith's epitaph should be not in Latin, but in English; but "Mr. Langton, like a sturdy scholar, refused to sign it." In Miss

Hawkins' *Memoirs* we read how "he would get into the most fluent recitation of half a page of Greek, breaking off for fear of wearying, by saying, as I well remember was his phrase, 'and so it goes on;' accompanying his words with a gentle wave of his hand, indicating that you might better suppose the rest than bear his proceeding." He could nevertheless enjoy a liberty taken with his beloved Greek, and one evening as Boswell writes, "made us laugh heartily at some lines by Joshua Barnes in which are to be found such comical Anglo-Ellenisms as κλόββοισιν ἔβαγχθεν, they were banged with clubs." Mr. Best has given an account of an evening that he once spent in his company. "In the course of conversation he took out a small pocket-album, containing *bon-mots*, or heads and notices of *bon-mots*, which he filled out and commented upon in a most amusing manner. Among other witticisms was a short copy of macaronic Greek verses, of which I remember 'five-poundon elendeto, ah! mala simplos.'" He was no unfit successor to his great friend in the Professorship of Ancient Literature in the Royal Academy.

Johnson had taken him in the early days of their friendship to see Richardson, who had little conversation except about his own works. "Johnson," says Langton, "professed that he could bring him out into conversation, and used this allusive expression, 'Sir, I can make him *rear*.' But he failed; for in that interview Richardson said little else than that there lay in the room a translation of his *Clarissa* into German." He had also visited Young, who told him when they were walking in the garden, "Here I had put a handsome sun-dial, with this inscription, *Eheu fugaces!* which (speaking with a smile) was sadly verified, for by the next morning my dial had been carried off." "Young," he remarked, "showed a degree of curiosity concerning the common occurrences that were then passing, which appeared somewhat remarkable in a man of such intellectual stores, of such an advanced age, and who had retired from life with declared disappointment in his expectations." He was intimate indeed with most of the men of letters of his time, but it was in Johnson's house "at his levee of morning visitors, when he was declaiming over his tea, which he drank very plentifully," that he was mostly to be found. Langton, early in their acquaintance, had invited Johnson to visit his father's house at Spilsby, but he wrote in reply that much as he would have liked to have gone, nevertheless he must forbear the pleasure. "I will give the true reason," he writes, "which I know you will approve:—I have a mother more than eighty years old, who has counted the days to the publication of my book (his *Dictionary*) in hopes of seeing me; and to her, if I can disengage myself here, I resolve to go." A year or two later on he again writes to him, "I go on, as I formerly did, designing to be some time or other both rich and wise; and yet cultivate neither mind nor fortune. Do you take notice of my example and learn the danger of delay. When I was as you are now, towering in confidence of twenty-one, little did I suspect that I should be at forty-nine what I now am. But you do not seem to need my admonition. You are busy in acquiring and

in communicating knowledge, and while you are studying, enjoy the end of study, by making others wiser and happier. I was much pleased with the tale that you told me of being tutor to your sisters. I, who have no sisters nor brothers, look with some degree of innocent envy on those who may be said to be born friends, and cannot see, without wonder, how rarely that native union is afterwards regarded." He goes on to say, "we tell the ladies that good wives make good husbands; I believe it is a more certain position that good brothers make good sisters." He acknowledges in the same letter a present of game from Langton. He had left off housekeeping—his wife was by this time dead—and therefore gave the birds away. "The pheasant I gave to Mr. Richardson" (the author of *Clarissa*). He writes to him when he is at Trinity College, Oxford, and says, "You who are very capable of anticipating futurity and raising phantoms before your own eyes, must often have imagined to yourself an academical life, and have conceived what would be the manners, the views, and the conversation of men devoted to letters; how they would choose their companions; how they would direct their studies, and how they would regulate their minds. Let me know what you expected and what you found." He thus ends his letter to the young student, "I live, dear Sir, to think on you, and therefore should willingly write more to you but that the post," &c. Two years later in again writing to him he says, "While you have been riding and running, and seeing the tombs of the learned, and the camps of the valiant, I have only staid at home and intended to do great things, which I have not done;" and he goes on to say, "Let me hear from you again, wherever you are, or whatever you are doing; whether you wander or sit still, plant trees or make Rusticks, play with your sisters, or muse alone." The Rusticks, Boswell tells us, were some essays, with that title, written about this time by Mr. Langton, but not published. We should be curious to know whether they are still preserved in the family house at Langton.

He wrote pleasantly enough, as we can see from the paper that he contributed to *The Idler* (No. 67). He describes "a man of vast designs and of vast performances, though he sometimes designed one thing and performed another." He ends by enforcing a position which he had no doubt often heard Johnson maintain—for it was a familiar one with him—that "he who finds himself strongly attracted to any particular study, though it may happen to be out of his proposed scheme, if it is not trifling or vicious, had better continue his application to it, since it is likely that he will, with much more ease and expedition, attain that which a warm inclination stimulates him to pursue, than that at which a prescribed law compels him to toil."

It was at Trinity College that Langton made the acquaintance of Topham Beauclerk, and so led to the celebrated "frisk" which the sage took with his two youthful friends. Langton, it will be remembered, deserted the other two, "being engaged to breakfast with some young ladies."

Johnson scolded him for "leaving his social friends to go and sit with a set of wretched unidea'd girls." He was an admirable reader aloud, but though his readings surpassed, as was thought, the actor's recitations, yet he did not overcome Johnson's "extreme impatience to be read to." Boswell tells us how "when a very young man he read to him Dodsley's *Cleone*, a tragedy. As it went on Johnson turned his face to the back of his chair, and put himself into various attitudes, which marked his uneasiness. At the end of an act, however, he said, "Come, let's have some more, let's go into the slaughter-house again, Lanky. But I am afraid there is more blood than brains."

"If I were called on," writes Miss Hawkins, "to name the person with whom Johnson might have been seen to the greatest advantage, I should certainly name Mr. Langton. His good breeding and the pleasing tone of his voice would have given the pitch to Johnson's replies; his classic acquirements would have brought out those of the other speaker; while the thorough respect Johnson entertained for him would have prevented that harshness which sometimes alarmed a third person." He had, however, one failing—a failing that leaned to virtue's side. "I mentioned," says Boswell, "a worthy friend of ours" (no doubt Langton) "whom we valued much, but observed that he was too ready to introduce religious discourse upon all occasions. JOHNSON. 'Why yes, Sir, he will introduce religious discourse without seeing whether it will end in instruction and improvement, or produce some profane jest. He would introduce it in the company of Wilkes and twenty more such.'" It was to what Johnson considered an indiscretion of this sort that the breach in their friendship was due. At a dinner at the Messieurs Dilly, the booksellers in the Poultry, there had been a hot discussion on toleration. Johnson had just quarrelled with Goldsmith, when a gentlemen present (who, there is little doubt, was Langton) "ventured to ask him if there was not a material difference as to toleration of opinions which lead to action, and opinions merely speculative; for instance, would it be wrong in the magistrate to tolerate those who preach against the doctrine of the Trinity. Johnson was highly offended, and said, 'I wonder, Sir, how a gentleman of your piety can introduce this subject in a mixed company.'" In spite of this sharp rebuke, on leaving the house Langton went with Johnson and Boswell to the Club, and the following day Johnson, in fulfilment no doubt of an old engagement, dined at his house. At the Club that evening occurred that fine scene when Johnson begged Goldsmith's pardon for what had passed at dinner, and Goldsmith answered placidly, "It must be much from you, Sir, that I take ill." We are inclined to think that Langton's resentment was increased by the contrast. Both had been harshly treated, but it was only Goldsmith to whom amends were made. On the following day Langton made his will, "devising his estate to his three sisters in preference to a remote heir male. Johnson called them (Langton of course was not present) three *dowdies*, and said, with as high a spirit as the

boldest baron in the most perfect days of the feudal system, 'an ancient estate should always go to males.'" Boswell goes on to add "He now laughed immoderately, without any reason that we could perceive, at our friend's making his will, calling him the *testator*, and added 'I dare say he thinks he has done a mighty thing. He won't stay till he gets home to his seat in the country to produce this wonderful deed—he'll call up the landlord of the first inn on the road; and after a suitable preface upon mortality and the uncertainty of life, will tell him that he should not delay making his will; and here, Sir, will he say, is my will, which I have just made, with the assistance of one of the ablest lawyers in the kingdom; and he will read it to him (laughing all the time). He believes he has made this will; but he did not make it. You, Chambers, made it for him. I trust you have had more conscience than to make him say "being of a sound understanding;" ha, ha, ha! I hope he has left me a legacy. I'd have his will turned into verse like a ballad.' It was in continuation of this merry strain that Johnson 'burst into such a fit of laughter that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion; and in order to support himself laid hold of one of the posts at the side of the foot-pavement, and sent forth peals so loud that in the silence of the night his voice seemed to resound from Temple Bar to Fleet Ditch." Johnson writes to Boswell two months later, "——" (no doubt Langton) "left the town without taking leave of me, and is gone in deep dudgeon to ——. Is not this very childish? Where is now my legacy?'" It was in the autumn of this year that Johnson went to Scotland, but neither in going or returning did he stop at Langton. In his journal of the Tour Boswell says, "we talked of one of our friends taking ill for a length of time a hasty expression of Dr. Johnson's to him, on his introducing, in a mixed company, a religious subject so unseasonably as to provoke a rebuke. JOHNSON: 'What is to become of society, if a friendship of twenty years is to be broken off for such a cause?' As Bacon says—

> Who then to frail mortality shall trust;
> But limns the water, or but writes in dust."

By the following summer much had been done to bind up the friendship again, and Johnson writes to Langton, telling him of poor Goldsmith's death. He ends his letter by saying "Do not be sullen now, but let me find a letter when I come back." And in the next winter, writing to Boswell, he says, "Langton is here! we are all that ever we were. He is a worthy fellow, without malice, though not without resentment."

Langton had married, two or three years earlier than the date of this quarrel, "one of those three Countess Dowagers of Rothes, who had all of them the fortune to get second husbands at about the same time." He had invited Goldsmith and Reynolds, together with Johnson, as it would seem, to visit him at his seat in Lincolnshire. Goldsmith in a pleasant letter, that Mr. Forster gives in full, declines. He was so much employed "in the country at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to

write a comedy" (*She Stoops to Conquer*) that he has to put off his intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season, and as it proved, alas! for all seasons. "Everybody," he says, "is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard, too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh." He goes on to say "I have published, or Davies has published for me, an *Abridgment of the History of England*, for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size that, as 'Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody. However, they set me down as an arrant Tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it you'll say that I am a sour Whig."

Johnson did make a visit to Lincolnshire, the remembrance of which was long preserved. For when, many years later, Mr. Best visited Langton, "after breakfast," he writes, "we walked to the top of a very steep hill behind the house. When we arrived at the summit, Mr. Langton said, 'Poor, dear Dr. Johnson, when he came to this spot, turned back to look down the hill, and said he was determined 'to take a roll down.' When we understood what he meant to do we endeavoured to dissuade him; but he was resolute, saying, 'he had not had a roll for a long time;' and taking out of his lesser pockets whatever might be in them—keys, pencil, purse, or penknife—and laying himself parallel with the edge of the hill, he actually descended, turning himself over and over till he came to the bottom.'" Mr. Best goes on to say: "The story was told with such gravity, and with an air of such affectionate remembrance of a departed friend, that it was impossible to suppose this extraordinary freak of the great lexicographer to have been a fiction or invention of Mr. Langton."

Langton, for some years of his married life, lived at an expense almost beyond his means. He could not, we suppose, spare time from his Aristophanes for his minutes of *acceptum et expensum*. Johnson, in a letter to Boswell, says "I do not like his scheme of life, but as I am not permitted to understand it, I cannot set anything right that is wrong."

When Boswell was next up in London, "we talked," says he, "of a gentleman" (Langton we may feel almost sure) "who was running out his fortune in London; and I said, 'We must get him out of it. All his friends must quarrel with him, and that will soon drive him away.' JOHNSON: 'Nay, Sir, we'll send *you* to him. If your company does not drive a man out of his house, nothing will.'" A few days later on they were again talking of "a gentleman who we apprehended was gradually involving his circumstances by bad management." Langton again, no doubt, is meant. Johnson said, "Wasting a fortune is evaporation by a thousand imperceptible means. If it were a stream, they'd stop it. You must speak to him. It is really miserable. Were he a gamester, it could be said he had hopes of winning. Were he

a bankrupt in trade, he might have grown rich; but he has neither spirit to spend nor resolution to spare. He does not spend fast enough to have pleasure from it. He has the crime of prodigality and the wretchedness of parsimony." Another time he said, "He is ruining himself without pleasure. A man who loses at play, or who runs out his fortune at Court, makes his estate less, in hopes of making it bigger; but it is a sad thing to pass through the quagmire of parsimony to the gulf of ruin. To pass over the flowery path of extravagance is very well." Later on he writes to Boswell, that "—— has laid down his coach, and talks of making more contractions of his expense: how he will succeed, I know not. It is difficult to reform a household gradually; it may be better done by a system totally new." He goes on to add, "What I told him of the increasing expense of a growing family seems to have struck him. He certainly had gone on with very confused views, and we have, I think, shown him that he is wrong; though, with the common deficience of advisers, we have not shown him how to do right." Though Langton showed indolence in money matters, yet Johnson praised him for his vigour as a captain of militia. "Langton," he writes, "has been encamped with his company of militia on Warley Common; I spent five days amongst them; he signalized himself as a diligent officer, and has very high respect in the regiment. He presided when I was there at a court-martial." Boswell also pats him on the back, and writes to express to Johnson the pleasure with which he had found "that our worthy friend Langton was highly esteemed in his own county town."

If Langton was a tender brother, he was no less tender a father. Johnson indeed at one time complained in writing about the table he kept, that "he has his children too much about him." In one of his letters, however, he seems to hint that Boswell might, with advantage, see a little more of his. "Langton has been down with the militia," he says, "and is again quiet at home, talking to his little people, as, I suppose, you do sometimes." In writing to Langton, he begs him to keep him "in the memory of all the little dear family, particularly pretty Mrs. Jane" (his god-child); and in another letter he says, after describing his own mournful state, "You, dear Sir, have, I hope, a more cheerful scene; you see George fond of his book, and the pretty misses airy and lively, with my own little Jenny equal to the best; and in whatever can contribute to your quiet and pleasure, you have Lady Rothes ready to concur." In the last year of his life he writes, "How does my own Jenny? I think I owe Jenny a letter, which I will take care to pay. In the mean time tell her that I acknowledge the debt." A month later he pays the debt. "He took the trouble to write the letter in a large round hand, nearly resembling printed characters, that she might have the satisfaction of reading it herself." "The original," says Boswell, "now lies before me, but shall be faithfully restored to her; and I dare say will be preserved by her as a jewel as long as she lives." She did preserve it, and nearly sixty years later showed it to Mr. Croker. The letter begins, "My

dearest Miss Jenny," and ends, "I am, my dear, your most humble servant, Sam. Johnson."

"Of the children of the family," says Miss Hawkins, "Dr. Johnson was very fond. They were, in their full number, ten, with not a plain face nor a faulty person. They were taught to behave to Johnson as they would have done to a grandfather, and he felt it." "It was Langton's intention," she goes on to state, "to educate his children at home, and under only parental tutelage. He therefore settled in Westminster, determined to live very quietly, and devote himself to this grand duty, in which the children of both sexes were to be equally considered. He told my father he should not only give his sons but his daughters a knowledge of the learned languages, and that he meant to familiarise the latter to the Greek language to such perfection, that while five of his girls employed themselves in feminine works, the sixth should read a Greek author for the general amusement." The home education would not seem to have succeeded. "Mr. Langton knew not how much the possession of extensive learning sometimes overshoots the power of communicating first elements; he was bewildered in his own labyrinth of ideas, and, I believe, was a little sickened of his plan by the late King's frequently repeated enquiry, 'How does education go on?'" George Langton, the eldest son, at all events, had, as Mr. Best tells us, "profited by the conversation and instruction of his father, so as to become a man of almost universal, though perhaps superficial, literary knowledge." A tutor, named Lusignan, had been engaged to teach him modern Greek, of whom he used to tell the following anecdote: "It had been imposed on him by his director as a penance to recite a certain number of times, before breakfast, the words Κύριε ἐλεεῖσον. He paced his chamber impatiently, repeating with what seemed practised rapidity the words prescribed, ever and anon, however, opening his door, and calling downstairs to the maid, 'Is my breakfast ready?'"

On one occasion, when Johnson was at Langton's house, "before dinner," says Boswell, "he said nothing but 'Pretty baby!' to one of the children. Langton said very well to me afterwards, that he could repeat Johnson's conversation before dinner, as Johnson had said that he could repeat a complete chapter of the 'Natural History of Iceland,' from the Danish of Horrebow, the whole of which was exactly thus:—

'CHAP. LXXII.—Concerning Snakes.—There are no snakes to be met with throughout the whole island.'"

When, on Beauclerk's death, Langton received by his will Reynolds' portrait of Johnson, with the inscription on the frame:

Ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore,

he had the lines effaced. Johnson said, complacently, "It was kind in you to take it off;" and then, after a short pause, added, "and not unkind in him to put it on." We must not forget that the great painter and the great lexicographer, as men then delighted to call him, had just before thought so highly of the two friends that when they were still quite young

men, they had invited them, with Goldsmith and Burke, to join them in founding The Club.

Nothing is more pleasant in Langton's life than that scene for a comedy, as Sir Joshua described it, when the penitent got into a panic and belaboured his confessor. "When I was ill," said Johnson, "I desired Langton would tell me sincerely in what he thought my life was faulty. Sir, he brought me a sheet of paper, on which he had written down several texts of Scripture, recommending Christian charity. And when I questioned him what occasion I had given for such animadversion, all that he could say amounted to this—that I sometimes contradicted people in conversation. Now what harm does it do to any man to be contradicted?" Boswell, in describing the scene, says that "Johnson, at the time when the paper was presented to him, though at first pleased with the attention of his friend, whom he thanked in an earnest manner, soon exclaimed, in a loud and angry tone, "What is your drift, sir?" What an admirable subject for Hogarth, if he had lived to paint it!

When Johnson's last illness was upon him, Langton, as we have said, came up from Lincolnshire to be with his dying friend. He took lodgings in Fleet Street, so that he might be near at hand. "Nobody," says Boswell, "was more attentive to him than Mr. Langton, to whom he tenderly said, "*Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.*"

His failing hand did not, indeed, at the very moment of death hold his friend's. Stupor had set in, and even the gentle Bennet Langton, the friend of thirty years, would have been as a stranger to him. A letter has been preserved, in Langton's handwriting, a letter which was never finished and never sent, but meant likely enough for Boswell, in which we read, "I am now writing in the room where his venerable remains exhibit a spectacle, the interesting solemnity of which, difficult as it would be in any sort to find terms to express, so to you, my dear Sir, whose own sensations will paint it so strongly, it would be of all men the most superfluous to attempt to ——." Here grief, it would seem, got the better of the writer, and the letter was left, with all the eloquence of a broken utterance.

Langton survived Johnson many years. Mrs. Piozzi, in a passage which shows all the spite of a small mind, writes, "The Dean of Winchester's account of Bennet Langton coming to town some few years after the death of Dr. Johnson, and finding no house where he was even asked to dinner, was exceedingly comical. Mr. Wilberforce dismissed him with a cold 'Adieu, dear Sir; I hope we shall meet in heaven.' How capricious is the public taste! I remember when to have Langton at a man's house stamped him at once a literary character."

Public taste is capricious, but yet as long as Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is read, so long will there be men to love the memory of the gentle Bennet Langton, the worthy friend who was serious and yet cheerful, who did not keep his minutes of *acceptum et expensum*, but had read Clenardus.

G. B. H.

Three Feathers.

CHAPTER XVI.

SPRING-TIME.

THE Spring-time had indeed arrived—rapidly and imperceptibly; and all at once it seemed as if the world had grown green, and the skies fair and clear, and the winds sweet with a new and delightful sweetness. Each morning that Wenna went out brought some further wonder with it—along the budding hedgerows, in the colours of the valley, in the fresh warmth of the air, and the white light of the skies. And at last the sea began to show its deep and resplendent summer blue, when the morning happened to be still, and there was a silvery haze along the coast.

"Mabyn, is your sister at home? And do you think she could go up to the Hall for a little while, for my mother wants to see her? And do you think she would walk round by the cliffs—for it is such a capital morning—if you came with her?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Trelyon," said Mabyn, readily, and with far more respect and courtesy than she usually showed to the young gentleman, "I am quite sure Wenna can go; and I know she would like to walk round by the cliffs—she is always glad to do that—and I will tell her to get ready instantly. But I can't go, Mr. Trelyon—I am exceedingly busy this morning."

"Why, you have been reading a novel!"

"But I am going to be exceedingly busy," said Mabyn, petulantly. "You can't expect people to be always working—and I tell you I can't go with you, Mr. Trelyon."

THEY WALKED THROUGH THE LEAFY ALLEYS OF THE GARDEN.

"Oh, very well," said he, carelessly; "you needn't show your temper."

"*My* temper!" said Mabyn; but then she recollected herself, and smiled derisively, and went away to fetch her sister.

When Wenna came outside into the sunlight, and went forward to shake hands with him, with her dark eyes lit up by a friendly smile, it seemed to him that not for many a day—not certainly during all the time of her engagement with Mr. Roscorla—had he seen her look so pleased, happy, and contented. She still bore that quiet gravity of demeanour which had made him call her the little Puritan, and there was the same earnestness in her eyes as they regarded anyone; but there was altogether a brighter aspect about her face that pleased him exceedingly. For he was very well disposed to this shy and yet matter-of-fact young person, and was alternately amused by the quaintness of her motherly ways in dealing with the people about her, and startled into admiration by some sudden glimpse of the fine sincerity of her nature. He had done more to please her—he had gone to church several times, and tried to better his handwriting, and resolved to be more careful in speaking of parsons in her presence—than he ever thought he could have done to please any woman.

So these two set forth on this bright and cheerful morning; and one would have said, to see them as they went, that two happier young folks were not within the county of Cornwall at that moment. Wenna had a pleasant word for everyone that passed; and when they had gone by the mill, and reached the narrow path by the tiny harbour, where no more neighbours were to be seen, she appeared to transfer her abounding sympathy to all the objects around her, and she spoke to them, and laughed to them, so that all the world seemed to be friendly with her. Her sister used to say that her fingers tingled to the very tips with kindness; and at this moment she seemed as though she could have kissed her hand to all the birds and animals around, and wished them joy that they had so fine a morning.

"Ho, ho! Mr. Porpoise," she laughed and said as she saw far below her a big fish slowly heel over in the blue water of the harbour; "don't you come too far up, or you won't like the stones in the stream, I know!"

There was a hawk hovering high in the air over Blackcliff—Trelyon was watching it keenly.

"Oh, go away, you bad bird," she cried, "and let the poor little things alone!" And sure enough, at this moment, the motionless speck up there began to flutter its wings, and presently it sailed away over the cliff, and was seen no more.

"Mother Sheep," she said to the inattentive custodian of two very small lambs with very thick legs and uncertain gait, "why don't you look after your children? you'll have them tumbling down the rocks into the sea in about a minute—that's about what you'll do!"

"Boom!" she said to a great humble-bee that flew heavily by; and to a white butterfly that went this way and that over the warm grass on the hillside she called out, "My pretty lady, aren't you glad the summer is coming?"

She talked to the white and grey gulls that were wheeling over the sea, and to the choughs flying hither and thither about the steep precipices of the cliff. They did not answer her; but that was no matter. From her childhood she had believed that she knew them all, and that they knew her; and that even the cliffs, and the sea, and the clouds regarded her, and spoke to her in a strange and silent fashion. Once she had come back from the mouth of the harbour on a sultry afternoon, when as yet the neighbours had heard nothing of the low mutterings of the distant and coming storm; and when her mother asked the child why she was so silent, she said, "I have been listening to God walking on the sea."

Well, they sat down on a seat which fronted the wide opening in the cliffs and the great plain of the Atlantic beyond, that was this morning of a light and sunny sea-green, with here and there broad purple stains of shadow as the summer clouds passed rapidly over the sky from the west. In the warm sunshine, the gorse on the hill behind them, and the grass on the pasture-land, sweetened the air. The wind blew fresh in from the sea; and as the green waves broke white along the rocks beneath them, the brisk breeze carried it with a flavour of salt from the fine clouds of the spray. The Spring-time seemed to have given life and colour to the sea as well as to the land, for all the world was brilliant with the new brightness of the skies.

"And isn't it first-rate," said Master Harry, wishing to say something very pleasant to his companion, "that Mr. Roscorla is having such fine weather on his way out? I am sure you would have been very anxious if there had been any storms about. I hope he will be successful; he's a good sort of fellow."

No one who was not acquainted with this young gentleman could have guessed at the dire effort he had to make in order to pronounce these few sentences. He was not accustomed to say formally civil things. He was very bad at paying compliments; and as for saying anything friendly of Mr. Roscorla, he had to do it with a mental grimace. But Wenna was very familiar with the lad and his ways. At another time she would have been amused and pleased to observe his endeavours to be polite; and now, if she hastened away from the subject, it was only because she never heard Mr. Roscorla's name mentioned without feeling embarrassment and showing it. She murmured something about a hope that Mr. Roscorla would not find the voyage to Jamaica fatiguing; and then, somewhat hastily, drew her companion's attention to another porpoise which was showing itself from time to time outside the rocks.

"I wish Roscorla had made me your guardian in his absence," said this blundering lad, who was determined to be on his best behaviour.

"I quite agree with Mabyn that you overwork yourself in doing for other people what the lazy beggars ought to do for themselves. Oh, I know more than you think. I'd wake some of them up if I had the chance. Why, they look on you as a sort of special Providence, bound to rescue them at any moment. I was told only yesterday of old Mother Truscott having said to a neighbour, 'Well, if Miss Wenna won't help me, then the Lord's will be done.'"

"Oh yes, I know," said his companion, with some impatience; "she is always saying that. I said to her the other day, when I got out of temper, 'Why, of course the Lord's will will be done; you don't suppose he wants your permission? But if you'd only look after your own house, and bestir yourself, and keep it smart, your husband wouldn't go on as he does.' There's nothing I hate worse than that sort of pretended piety. Why, when Abiathar Annot's boy died, I thought he'd be out of his senses with grief, and I went up to see if he was all right about the house, and to say a friendly word to him; and directly I went into the house he said to me, quite complacently, 'Well, Miss Rosewarne, you know we must bow to the will of the Lord, and accept his chastenings as mercies.' 'Oh,' said I, 'if you take it that way, I've no more to say,' and I left the place. I don't believe in all that sort of——"

She suddenly stopped, recollecting to whom she was speaking. Were these proper confessions to be made to a young man who had such a godless hatred of parsons, and churches, and all good things; and whose conversion to more respectable ways she had many a time wished to attempt? She dropped that subject; and Master Harry was so resolved to be proper and virtuous that morning, that he took no advantage of what she had said. He even, in an awkward fashion, observed that all pious people were not hypocrites; one had to draw distinctions. Of course there were pious people who were really sincere. He hoped Miss Wenna would not suspect him of being so prejudiced as not to know that. Miss Wenna was a little inclined to smile, but she controlled her countenance; and Master Harry, having paid these ingenuous compliments to virtue and religion, rose with a frank sigh of relief, proposed that they should continue their walk up the hill, and was soon engaged in telling her—with a much gayer tone in his voice and with a return to his old impertinent carelessness—of some wild adventure in cliff-hunting which he and his faithful Dick had encountered together.

They seemed to be in no great hurry, these two. It was a morning that invited to idleness. They chatted about all sorts of things, or were silent, with equal and happy indifference, he watching the sea-birds, she stooping from time to time to pick up some tiny flower of pale yellow or purple. In this fashion they made their way up to the summit of the cliffs, and there before them lay the great plain of the windy sea, and the long wall of precipice running down into the south-west, and the high and bleak uplands, marked by the square towers of small and distant churches. They struck across the fields to one of those churches—that which Master

Harry had been persuaded to visit. The place was now silent enough: two jackdaws sat on the slender weather-cock; the sunlight was warm on the silvery grey tower, and on the long green grass in the churchyard, in which the first daisies of the spring had appeared. Then they went down through some narrow lanes towards the higher portion of Eglosilyan; and under the hedges were masses of pale primroses, and the purple blossoms of the ground-ivy, and the golden stars of the celandine. They drew near some of the cottages; and in the gardens the flowering currant was in bloom, and everywhere there was a scent of wallflower. They crossed the main thoroughfare of the village; it was empty but for the presence of a small boy, who, with a slate slung on one side and a bag made of carpet slung on the other, had apparently been sent home from school for some reason or other. The youthful scholar most respectfully took off his cap to Miss Wenna as she gave him a kindly greeting in passing.

"They say all that is owing to you," Trelyon remarked.

"All what?"

"The good manners of the people in this village. The women bob you a curtsey as you pass, the girls say good morning or good evening, the boys take off their caps, even if you are a perfect stranger. But you don't suppose that happens in every village in Cornwall? My mother was speaking about it only this morning."

Wenna was sufficiently surprised to know that she had got the credit of the courtesy shown to strangers by the Eglosilyan folks; but even more surprised to learn that Master Harry had deigned to engage in conversation with his mother. He also seemed to be taking his first lessons in civility.

"Oh," she said, "that boy ought to pay me every attention to make up for his bad conduct. He was once a sweetheart of mine, and he deceived me. He sold me for sixpence."

She sighed.

"It is true. He adopted me as his sweetheart, and every time I saw him he promised to marry me when he grew up. But there came a change. He avoided me, and I had to catch him, and ask him why. He confessed. I wasn't his sweetheart any more. His elder brother, aged ten, I think, had also wanted me for a sweetheart, and he had a sixpence; and sixpence was the price of a new sort of spinning-top that had just been put into the window at the Post-office; and the elder brother proposed to the younger brother to take the sixpence and buy the top, and hand me over. 'So yü baint my sweetheart anny mower,' said that young gentleman, forgetting his good English in his grief. But I think he has a tender recollection of me even now."

"I'd have thrashed the little brute for his meanness if I had been you," said her companion, in his off-hand way.

"Oh no," she answered, with a meek sarcasm; "wasn't he only doing as a child what grown-up gentlemen are said to do? When there

is money on the one hand and a sweetheart on the other, doesn't the sweetheart suffer as a rule?"

"What can you know about it?" he said bluntly. "In any case, *you* don't run any danger. Mr. Roscorla is not likely to be tempted by bags of gold."

Mr. Roscorla—always Mr. Roscorla. Wenna, who crimsoned deeply at the slightest reference to the relations between herself and her absent lover, began to be somewhat angry with this thoughtless lad, who would continually introduce the name. What was his object in doing so? To show her that he never failed to remember her position, and that that was his excuse for talking very frankly to her, as he would have done to a sister? Or merely to please her by speaking of one who ought to be very dear to her? She was not indebted to him for this blundering effort of kindness; and on any less cheerful morning might have visited him with one of those fits of formal politeness or of constrained silence with which young ladies are accustomed to punish too forward acquaintances.

But Miss Wenna had it not in her heart to be reserved on this pleasant forenoon; she good-naturedly overlooked the pertinacious mistakes of her companion; and talked to him—and to the flowers, and birds, and trees around her—with a happy carelessness until the two of them together made their way up to the Hall. Just as Master Harry opened the gate at the end of the avenue, and turned to let her through, he seemed for the first time to notice her dress. He made no scruple of stopping her for a moment to look at it.

"Oh, I say, I wish you could get my mother to dress like you!"

The burst of admiration was so genuine that Miss Wenna—being only a girl—was very much pleased indeed; and blushed a little, and would rather have passed on. There was nothing, indeed, remarkable about her costume—about the rough light grey dress with its touches here and there of blue, nor yet about the white hat with its forget-me-nots and big white daisies—except that it seemed to fit well a very pretty figure, and also that the blue suited the dark and clear complexion and the dark eyes and hair.

"I'm sick of her stalking about the house in the guise of a ghost—she all white, everything else black. I say, Wenna, don't you think you could get her to dress like a human being?"

"But if it is her wish, you ought to respect it."

"It's only a craze," he said, impatiently.

"It may seem so to you," his companion said; "but she has her own reasons for it, and they deserve your sympathy, even though they may not convince you. And you ought not to speak in that harsh way of one who is so very good and gentle, and who is so considerate towards you."

"Oh, you always find excuses for people," he said, roughly. "Everybody should be considered, and respected, and have their fine feelings praised and coddled, according to you. Everybody is perfect, according to you."

"Oh dear, no," she said, quite humbly. "I know one or two people

whose conduct and habits, and their manners, too, might be very much improved indeed."

"I suppose you mean me?" he said.

"And if I did?" she said boldly. "Don't you think, when you want your mother to be just as you would have her to be, that she might turn round and say that there was a great deal more in you that she might wish to have altered? You know her manner of life is not necessarily wrong merely because you can't understand it. As for yours——"

"Go ahead!" he cried, with a loud and suddenly good-natured laugh. "Heap up all my sins on my head! I'm getting used to be lectured now. Please Miss Puritan, would you like me to get a surplice and come and sing hymns in the choir?"

Miss Puritan did not answer. There was no look of annoyance on her face—only a certain calm reserve that told her companion that he had somehow wounded the friendly confidence that had sprung up between them during this pleasant morning ramble. And at this moment they reached the front of the Hall, where Mrs. Trelyon came forward to greet her visitor, so that Master Harry had no further opportunity just then of asking her whether he had offended her, and of making an apology. He listened for a few minutes to his mother talking to Wenna about that Sewing Club. He became impatient with himself, and vexed, for Wenna seemed in no wise to recognise his presence; and of course his mother did not ask his advice about the purchase of flannel. He tossed about the books on the table; he teased an Angola cat that was lying before the fire until it tried to bite him, and then he put its nose into the water of a flower-vase. With the feather of a quill dipped in ink he drew a fox on one of the white tiles of the fireplace; and then he endeavoured to remove that work of art with the edge of a scarlet and gold footstool. These various occupations affording him no relief, he got up, stretched his legs, and said to his mother,

"Mother, you keep her here for lunch. I shall be back at two."

"Oh, but I can't stay so long," Wenna said, suddenly, "I know I shall be wanted at home."

"Oh no, you won't," the young gentleman said, coolly, "I know you won't. Mabyn told me so. Besides, I am going down now to tell them you will be back at four."

And so he went away, but his walk down to the inn was not as pleasant as that roundabout ramble up to the Hall had been.

CHAPTER XVII.

Only a Basket of Primroses.

"What a busy life you must lead," said Mrs. Trelyon, looking with a gentle wonder at the young lady before her. "You seem to know how to do everything."

Miss Wenna coloured a little, and said something about having had to help her mother for many years past.

"And such a knowledge of the world as you have!" Mrs. Trelyon continued, unconsciously staring at the girl as if she were some strange phenomenon. "Where did you get it?"

"That I am sure I have not got," Wenna said, brightening considerably, "for the strangers who come to the inn of course don't speak to me, except one or two of the very old ladies sometimes, and all they speak about is the scenery. But Mabyn and I read the remarks in the Visitors' Book, and these are very amusing, especially the poetry that the young gentlemen write; and indeed, Mrs. Trelyon, if one were to judge by that book, one would think that the world was very silly. The elderly gentlemen generally praise the cooking; the elderly ladies generally say something nice about the cleanliness of the bed-rooms and the good attendance; and the young ladies write about anything, recommending other visitors to go to particular places, or saying what they think of the Cornish peasantry. I am sure they are all very good-natured to us, and say very nice things of the inn; but then it looks so silly. And the young gentlemen are far the worst—especially the University young gentlemen, for they write such stupid poetry and make such bad jokes. I suppose it is that the fresh air gives them very good spirits, and they don't care what they say, and they never expect that their friends will see what they have written. I have noticed, though, that the walking gentlemen never write such things when they are leaving, for they are always too anxious about the number of miles they have to get over on that day, and they are always anxious, too, about the heels of their stockings. If you would like to see the book——"

Wenna stopped. Mrs. Trelyon had been very good in extending a sort of acquaintance to her, and now proposed to help her in a way with her work. But she was going too far in expecting that this reserved and silent lady should become a visitor at the inn, or interest herself in its commonplace affairs. At this moment, indeed, Mrs. Trelyon was so very much reserved, that she did not notice either Wenna's tentative invitation or her embarrassment when she cut it short.

"I wish," she said absently, showing what she had been thinking about, "I wish you could get Harry to go to one of the Universities."

It was now Wenna's turn to stare. Did the mother of that young gentleman seriously think that this stranger-girl had such an influence over him?

"Oh, Mrs. Trelyon," Wenna said, "how could I—— ?"

"He would do anything for you," the gentle lady said, with much simplicity and honesty. "He pays no attention to anything I say to him; but he would do anything for you. His whole manner changes when you are in the house. I think you are the only person in the world he is afraid of. And it was so good of you to get him to go to church."

"I am sure it was not I," said Wenna, getting rather afraid.

"But I know," said Mrs. Trelyon, quite affectionately, "for I have seen everybody else try and fail. You see, my dear, you are in a peculiar position. You are young, and a pleasant companion for a young man; and as you are no relation of his he is courteous to you. And then, you see, your being engaged to be married enables him to speak freely to you and treat you as a friend, and I think, besides, you have acquired some means of keeping him in check, and having authority over him, and I am sure he would do more for you than for any one I know. As for me, I have never had any control over him; but he is at least civil to me when you are in the room."

Wenna rose.

"Mrs. Trelyon," she said, "don't you think it is a pity to stay indoors on such a beautiful morning? The air is quite mild and warm outside."

She was glad to get out. There was something in this declaration of her responsibility for the young man's conduct which considerably startled and frightened her. It was all very well for her to administer an occasional sharp reproof to him when he was laughing and joking with herself and Mabyn, but to become the recognised monitress of so wild a pupil as Master Harry—to have his own mother appeal to her—that was quite a different affair. And on this occasion, when Mrs. Trelyon had got a shawl, and come outside with her guest, all her talk was about her son, and his ways, and his prospects. It was very clear that with all her lamentations over his conduct, Mrs. Trelyon was very fond of the young man, and was quite assured too that he had the brains to do anything he might be induced to undertake. Wenna listened in a vague way to all these complaints and speculations, and covert praises; she did not find her position so embarrassing in the open air as in that close drawing-room. They walked through the leafy alleys of the garden, unconsciously regarding the beautiful colour of the new spring flowers, and listening to the larks singing high up in the blue. From time to time, as they turned, they caught a glimpse of hills all a-blaze with gorse; and near the horizon a long line of pale azure with a single white ship visible in the haze. On the other side of the valley a man was harrowing; they could hear him calling to the horses, and the jingling of the chains. Then there was the murmur of the stream far below, where the sunlight just caught the light green of the larches. These, and the constant singing of the birds around them, were the only sounds that accompanied their talk, as they wandered this way and that by brilliant garden plots or through shaded avenues, where the air was sweet with the fresh scents of the opening summer.

And at last they came back to the proposal that Wenna should try to persuade Master Harry to go to Oxford or Cambridge.

"But, Mrs. Trelyon," the girl said earnestly, "I am quite sure you mistake altogether my relations with your son. I could not presume to

give him advice. It would not be my place to do so even if we were on the footing of friends, and that, at present, is out of the question. Don't you see, Mrs. Trelyon, that because Mr. Trelyon in coming about the inn was good-natured enough to make the acquaintance of my father, and to talk to us girls, it would not do for any of us to forget how we are situated. I don't anyway—perhaps because I am proud—but, at all events, I should not presume on Mr. Trelyon's good-nature. Don't you see, Mrs. Trelyon?"

"I see that you are a very practical, and sensible, and plain-spoken young lady," her companion said, regarding her with a kindly look, "but I think you don't do my son justice. It is not thoughtlessness that made him make your acquaintance. I don't think he ever did a more prudent thing in his life before. And then, dear Miss Rosewarne, you must remember—if I may speak of such a thing—that you will soon be the wife of one of the very few friends we have about here; and you must excuse us if we claim you as a friend already, and try to take advantage of your friendship. Now, do you see that?"

Wenna was not persuaded; but she was, at all events, very pleased to see that occasionally Mrs. Trelyon could forget her brooding sentimental fancies and become, comparatively, bright and talkative.

"Now will you say a word to him when he comes home for lunch?"

"Oh no, I can't do that, Mrs. Trelyon," Wenna said, "it would be quite rude of me to do that. Besides, if you would not be displeased with me, Mrs. Trelyon, for saying so, I don't think going to a University would do him any good. I don't think—I hope you won't be vexed with me—that he has had sufficient schooling. And isn't there an examination before you could get in? Well, I don't know about that; but I am quite sure that if he did get in, he would be too proud to put himself in competition with the other young men who were properly prepared for study, and he would take to boating, or cricket, or some such thing. Now, don't you think, Mrs. Trelyon, he would be as well occupied in amusing himself here, where you might gradually get him to take an interest in something besides shooting and fishing? He knows far more things than most people fancy, I know that. My father says he is very clever and can pick up anything you tell him; and that he knows more about the management of an estate, and about the slate quarries, and about mining too, than people imagine. And as for me," added the girl bravely, "I will say this, that I think him very clever indeed, and that he will make a straightforward and honourable man, and I should like to see him in Parliament, where he would be able to hold his own, I know."

"Oh, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Trelyon, with a joyful face, "I am so grateful to you. I am so proud to know you think so highly of him. And won't you say a word to him? He will do whatever you please."

But Miss Wenna had somehow been startled into that confession, and the sudden burst of honesty left her considerably ashamed and embarrassed. She would not promise to intermeddle in the matter, what

ever she had been induced to say about the future of the young man. She stooped to pick up a flower to cover her confusion, and then she asked Mrs. Trelyon to be good enough to excuse her staying to lunch.

"Oh no, I dare not do that," Mrs. Trelyon said, "Harry would pull the house down when he found I had let you go. You know we have no visitors at present, and it will be such a pleasure to have him lunch with me; he seldom does, and never at all if there are visitors. But really, Miss Rosewarne, it is so inconsiderate of me to talk always of him, as if you were as much interested as myself. Why the whole morning we have not said a word about you and all you are looking forward to. I do hope you will be happy. I am sure you will be, for you have such a sensible way of regarding things, and all is sure to go well. I must say that I thought Harry was a little more mad than usual when he first told me about that money; but now I know you, I am very, very glad indeed, and very pleased that I could be of some little service to Mr. Roscorla for your sake."

The girl beside her did not understand; she looked up with wondering eyes.

"What money, Mrs. Trelyon?"

"I mean the money that Harry got for Mr. Roscorla—the money, you know, for these Jamaica estates; is it possible Mr. Roscorla did not tell you before he left?"

"I don't know anything about it, Mrs. Trelyon, and I hope you will tell me at once," Wenna said, with some decision in her tone, but with a strange sinking at her heart.

"You don't know, then?" Mrs. Trelyon said, with a sudden fear that she had been indiscreet. "Oh, it is nothing, a mere business arrangement. Of course, gentlemen don't care to have these things talked over. I hope you won't mention it, dear Miss Rosewarne; I really thought you might have overheard them speaking of the matter."

Wenna said nothing. The soft dark eyes looked a little troubled, but that was all. And presently, up came young Trelyon, full of good spirits, and noise, and bustle; and he drove his mother and Wenna before him into the house; and hurried up the servants, and would open the wine himself. His mother checked him for whistling at luncheon; his reply was to toss the leg of a fowl on to the hearthrug, where a small and shaggy terrier immediately began to worry it. He put the Angola cat on the table to see if it would eat some Cornish cream off his plate. His pigeons got to know of his being in the house, and came flying about the windows and walking jerkingly over the lawn; he threw up the window and flung them a couple of handfuls of crumbs.

"Oh, Miss Wenna," said he, "would you like to see my tame fox? I am sure you would. Mather, you cut round to the stables and tell old Luke to bring that fox here—off you go—leave the claret this side."

"But I do not wish to see the fox; I particularly dislike foxes," said Wenna with some asperity; and Mather was recalled.

Master Harry grinned to himself; it was the first time he had been able to get her to speak to him. From the beginning of luncheon she had sat almost silent, observing his vagaries and listening to his random talk in silence; when she spoke it was always in answer to his mother. Very soon after luncheon she begged Mrs. Trelyon to excuse her going away; and then she went and put on her hat.

"I'll see you down to the inn," said Master Harry, when she came out to the hall door.

"Thank you, it is quite unnecessary," she said, somewhat coldly.

"Oh," said he, "you may be as nasty as you please, but I shall conquer you by my extreme politeness."

At another time she would have laughed at the notion of this young gentleman complimenting himself on his politeness; now, as she walked quietly down the gravelled path to the gate, she was very grave, and, indeed, took no notice of his presence.

"Wenna," said he, after he had shut the gate, and rejoined her, "is it fair to make such a fuss about a chance word? I think you are very hard. I did not mean to offend you."

"You have not offended me, Mr. Trelyon."

"Then why do you look so precious glum?"

She made no answer.

"Now look here, be reasonable. Are you vexed because I called you Wenna? Or is it because I spoke about singing in the choir."

"No," she said, simply, "I was not thinking of anything of that kind; and I am not vexed."

"Then what is the matter?"

For another second or two she was silent, apparently from irresolution; then she suddenly stopped in the middle of the road, and confronted him.

"Mr. Trelyon," she said, "is it true that you have given Mr. Roscorla money, and on my account?"

"No, it is not," he said, considerably startled by her tone; "I lent him some money—the money he wanted to take to Jamaica."

"And what business had you to do anything of the sort?" she said, with the shame in her heart lending a strangely unusual sharpness to her voice.

"Well," said the young man, quite humbly, "I thought it would be a service both to you and to him; and that there was no harm in it. If he succeeds he will pay me back. It was precious silly of him to tell you anything about it; but still, Miss Wenna—you must see—now don't be unreasonable—what harm could there be in it?"

She stood before him, her eyes cast down, her pale face a trifle flushed, and her hands clasped tight.

"How much was it?" she said in a low voice.

"Now, now, now," he said, in a soothing way, "don't you make a fuss about it; it is a business transaction; men often lend money to each

other—what a fool he must have been to have—I beg your pardon—" and then he stopped, frowning at his own stupidity.

"How much was it?"

"Well, if you must know, five thousand pounds."

"Five thousand pounds!" she repeated absently. "I am sure my father has not so much money. But I will bid you good-bye now, Mr. Trelyon."

And she held out her hand.

"Mayn't I walk down with you to the village?" said he, looking rather crestfallen.

"No, thank you," she said, quietly, and then she went away.

Well, he stood looking after her for a few seconds. Now that her back was turned to him and she was going away, there was no longer any brightness in the fresh spring woods, nor any colour in the clear skies overhead. She had been hard on him, he felt; and yet there was no anger or impatience in his heart, only a vague regret that somehow he had wounded her, and that they were no longer good friends. He stood so for a minute or two, and then he suddenly set out to overtake her. She turned slightly just as he had got up.

"Miss Wenna," he said, rather shamefacedly, "I forgot to ask you whether you would mind calling in at Mrs. Luke's as you go by. There is a basket of primroses there for you. I set the children to gather them about an hour ago; I thought you would like them."

She said she would; and then he raised his cap to her—looked at her just for one moment—and turned and walked away. Wenna called for the basket, and a very fine basket of flowers it was, for Mrs. Luke said that Master Harry had given the children sixpence a-piece to gather the finest primroses they could get, and everyone knows what Cornish primroses are. Wenna took away the flowers not paying any particular attention to them, and it was only when she got into her own room—and when she felt very much inclined to sit down and cry—that she noticed lying among the large and pale yellow primroses a bit of another flower which one of the children had, doubtless, placed there. It was merely a stalk of the small pink-flowered saxifrage, common in cottager's gardens, and called in some places London-pride. In other parts of the country they tenderly call it *None-so-pretty*.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONFIDENCES.

MEANWHILE, during the time that Wenna Rosewarne had been up at Trelyon Hall, her place in the inn had been occupied by a very handsome, self-willed, and gay-hearted young lady, who had endeavoured, after a somewhat wild fashion, to fulfil her sister's duties. She had gone

singing through the house to see that the maids had put the rooms right; she had had a fight with Jennifer about certain jellies; she had petted her mother and teased her father into a good humour, after which she went outside in her smart print dress and bright ribbons, and sat down on the bench of black oak at the door. She formed part of a pretty picture there; the bright April day was still shining all around, on the plashing water of the mill, on the pigeons standing on the roof, and on the hills beyond the harbour, which were yellow with masses of furze.

"And now," said this young lady to herself, "the question is, can I become a villain? If I could only get one of the persons out of a story to tell me how they managed to do it successfully, how fine that would be! Here is the letter in my pocket—of course it has his address in it. I burn the letter. Wenna doesn't write to him. He gets angry, and writes again and again. I burn each one as it comes; then he becomes indignant, and will write no more. He thinks she has forsaken him, and he uses naughty words, and pretends to be well rid of her. She is troubled and astonished for a time; then her pride is touched, and she won't mention his name. In the end, of course, she marries a handsome young gentleman, who is really in love with her, and they are so very happy—oh, it is delightful to think of it! and then a long time after, the other one comes home, and they all find out the villain—that's me—but they are all quite pleased with the way it has ended, and they forgive me. How clever they are in stories to be able to do that!"

She took a letter out of her pocket, and furtively looked at it. It bore a foreign postmark. She glanced round to see that no one had observed her, and concealed it again.

"To burn this one is easy. But old Malachi mightn't always let me rummage his bag; and a single one getting into Wenna's hands would spoil the whole thing. Besides, if Wenna did not write out to Jamaica he would write home to some of his friends—some of those nice, cautious, inquiring clergymen, no doubt, about the Hall—to let him know; and then there would be a pretty squabble. I never noticed how the villains in the stories managed that; I suppose there were no clever clergymen about, and no ill-tempered old postman like Malachi Lean. And oh! I should like to see what he says—he will make such beautiful speeches about absence, and trust, and all that; and he will throw himself on her mercy, and he will remind her of her engaged ring."

Mabyn laughed to herself—a quiet, triumphant laugh. Whenever she was very down-hearted about her sister's affairs, she used to look at the gypsy-ring of emeralds, and repeat to herself—

> Oh, green's forsaken
> And yellow's forsworn;
> And blue is the sweetest
> Colour that's worn!

—and on this occasion she reflected that perhaps, after all, it was scarcely

worth while for her to become a villain in order to secure a result that had already been ordained by Fate.

"Mab," said her father, coming out to interrupt her reflections, and speaking in a peevishly indolent voice; "where's Wenna? I want her to write some letters, and to go over to the Annots. Of course your mother's ill again, and can't do anything."

"Can't I write the letters?" said Mabyn.

"You? you're only fit to go capering about a dancing academy. I want Wenna."

"Well, I think you might let her have one forenoon to herself," Mabyn said, with some sharpness; "she doesn't take many holidays. She's always doing other people's work, and when they're quite able to do it for themselves."

Mabyn's father was quite insensible to the sarcasm; he said, in a complaining way,—

"Yes, that's sure enough; she's always meddling in other people's affairs, and they don't thank her for it. And a nice thing she's done with those Annots. Why, that young Hannabel fellow was quite content to mind his own bit of farm like any one else until she put it into his head to get a spring-cart, and drive all the way down to Devonport with his poultry, and now she's led him on so that he buys up the fish, and the poultry, and eggs, and butter and things from all the folks about him to sell at Devonport; and of course they're raising their prices, and they'll scarcely deal with you except as a favour, they've got so precious independent. And now he's come to the Tregear farm, and if Wenna doesn't interfere, they'll be contracting with him for the whole of the summer. There's one blessed mercy, when she gets married she'll have to stop that nonsense, and have to mind her own business."

"Yes," said Mabyn, with some promptitude, "and she has been left to mind her own business pretty well of late."

"What's the matter with you, Mabyn?" her father carelessly asked, noticing at length the peculiarity of her tone.

"Why," she said, indignantly, "you and mother had no right to let her go and engage herself to that man. You ought to have interfered. She's not fit to act for herself—she let herself be coaxed over, and you'll be sorry for it some day."

"Hold your tongue, child," her father said, "and don't talk about things you can't understand. A lot of experience *you* have had! If Wenna didn't want to marry him, she could have said so; if she doesn't want to marry him now, she has only to say so. What harm can there be in that?"

"Oh, yes; it's all very simple," the girl said to herself, as she rose and went away; "very simple to say she can do what she pleases; but she can't, and she should never have been allowed to put herself in such a position, for she will find it out afterwards if she doesn't now. It

seems to me there is nobody at all who cares about Wenna except me; and she thinks I am a child, and pays no heed to me."

Wenna came in; Mabyn heard her go upstairs to her own room, and followed her.

"Oh, Wenna, who gave you this beautiful basket of primroses?" she cried, guessing instantly who had given them. "It is such a pretty present to give to any one!"

"Mrs. Luke's children gathered them," Wenna said, coldly.

"Oh, indeed; where did the basket come from?"

"Mr. Trelyon asked them to gather me the primroses," Wenna said impatiently; "I suppose he got the basket."

"Then it is his present?" Mabyn cried. "Oh, how kind of him! And see, Wenna—don't you see what he has put in among the primroses? Look, Wenna—it is a bit of *None-so-pretty*. Oh, Wenna, that is a message to you!"

"Mabyn," her sister said, with a severity that was seldom in her voice, "you will make me vexed with you if you talk such nonsense. He would not dare to do such a thing—why, the absurdity of it! And I am not at all well-disposed towards Mr. Trelyon at this moment."

"I don't see why he shouldn't," said her sister humbly, and yet with a little inadvertent toss of the head; "everyone knows you are pretty except yourself, and there can be no harm in a young man telling you so. He is not a greater fool than anybody else. He has got eyes. He knows that everyone is in love with you—everyone that is *now* in Eglosilyan, anyway. He is a very gentlemanly young man. He is a great friend to you. I don't see why you should treat him so."

Mabyn began to move about the room, as she generally did when she was a trifle excited and indignant, and inclined to tears.

"There is no one thinks so highly of you as he does. He is more respectful to you than to all the people in the world. I think it is very hard and unkind of you."

"But, Mabyn, what have I done?" her sister said.

"You won't believe he sent you that piece of *None-so-pretty*. You won't take the least notice of his friendliness to you. You said you were vexed with him."

"Well, I have reason to be vexed with him," Wenna said, and would willingly have left the matter there.

But her sister was not to be put off. She coaxed for a few minutes, then became petulant, and affected to be deeply hurt; then assumed an air of authority, and said that she insisted on being told. Then the whole truth came out. Mr. Trelyon had been lending to Mr. Roscorla a sum of money which he had no business to lend. Mr. Trelyon had somehow mixed her up with the matter, under the impression that he was conferring a service on her. Mr. Trelyon had concealed the whole transaction from her, and, of course, Mr. Roscorla was silent also. And on the face of it Mr. Trelyon was responsible for Mr. Roscorla

going away from his native land to face all manner of perils, discomforts, and anxieties; for without that fatal sum of money he might still have been living in peace and contentment up at Bassett Cottage.

"Well, Wenna," said the younger sister candidly, and with a resigned air, "I never knew you so unreasonable before. All you seem able to do is to invent reasons for disliking Mr. Trelyon, and I have no doubt you used him shamefully when you saw him this forenoon. You are all love and kindness to people who have no claim on you—to brats in cottages and old women, but you are very hard on people who l—— who respect you. And then," added Miss Mabyn, drawing herself up, "if I were to tell you how the story of that money strikes me, would it surprise you? Who asked Mr. Roscorla to have the money and to go away? Not Mr. Trelyon I am sure. Who concealed it? Whose place was it to come and tell you—you who are engaged to him? If it comes to that, I'll tell you what I believe, and that is that Mr. Roscorla went and made use of the regard that Harry Trelyon has for you to get the money. There!"

Mabyn uttered the last words with an air which said, "*I will speak out this time, if I die for it.*" But the effect on her sister was strange. Of course, she expected Wenna to rise up indignantly and protest against her speaking of Mr. Roscorla in such a way. She was ready to brave her wrath. She fully thought they were entering on the deadliest quarrel that had ever occurred between them.

But whether it was that Wenna was too much grieved to care what her sister said, or whether it was that these frank accusations touched some secret consciousness in her own heart, the elder sister remained strangely silent, her eyes cast down. Mabyn looked at her, wondering why she did not get up in a rage: Wenna was stealthily crying. And then, of course, the younger sister's arms were round her in a minute, and there was a great deal of soothing and tender phrases; and finally Mabyn, not knowing otherwise how to atone for her indiscretion, pulled out Mr. Roscorla's letter, put it in Wenna's hand, and went away.

CHAPTER XIX.

The First Message Home.

Wenna was glad to have the letter at that moment. She had been distracted by all this affair of the money; she had been troubled and angry—with whom she could scarcely tell; but here was something that recalled her to a sense of her duty. She opened it, resolved to accept its councils and commands with all due meekness. For such kindness as he might choose to show, she would be grateful, and she would go back to her ordinary work more composed and cheerful, knowing that, whatever business affairs Mr. Roscorla might transact, her concern was only to

remain loyal to the promises she had made, and to the trust which he reposed in her.

And the letter was in reality a kind and friendly letter, written with a sort of good humour that did not wholly conceal a certain pathetic consciousness of distance and loneliness. It gave her a brief description of the voyage; of the look of the place at which he landed; of his meeting with his friends; and then of the manner in which he would have to spend his time while he remained in the island.

"My head is rather in a whirl as yet," he wrote, "and I can't sit down and look at the simple facts of the case—that every one knows how brief, and ordinary, and commonplace a thing a voyage from England to the West Indies is, and how, looking at a map, I should consider myself as only having run out here for a little trip. At present my memory is full of the long nights and of the early mornings, and of the immeasurable seas that we were always leaving behind, so that now I feel as if England were away in some other planet altogether, that I should never return to. It seems years since I left you at Launceston Station; when I look back to it I look through long days and nights of water, and nothing but water, and it seems as if it must be years and years before I could see an English harbour again, all masts, and smoke, and hurry, with posters up on the walls, and cabs in the streets, and somewhere or other a railway-station where you know you can take your ticket for Cornwall, and get into your old ways again. But I am not going to give way to home-sickness; indeed, my dear Wenna, you need not fear that, for, from all I can make out, I shall have plenty to look after, and quite enough to keep me from mooning and dreaming. Of course I cannot tell you yet how things are likely to turn out, but the people I have seen this morning are hopeful, and I am inclined to be hopeful myself, perhaps because the voyage has agreed with me very well, and has wonderfully improved my spirits. So I mean to set to work in good earnest, with the assurance that you are not indifferent to the results of it; and then, some day, when we are both enjoying these, you won't be sorry that I went away from you for a time. Already I have been speculating on all that we might do if this venture turns out well, for of course there is no necessity why you should be mewed up in Eglosilyan all your life, instead of feeling the enjoyment of change of scene and of interests. These are castles in the air, you will say, but they naturally arise in the mind when you are in buoyant health and spirits; and I hope, if I return to England in the same mood, you will become infected with my confidence, and add some gaiety to the quiet serenity of your life."

Wenna rather hurried over this passage; the notion that she might be enabled to play the part of a fine lady by means of the money which Harry Trelyon had lent to her betrothed was not grateful to her.

"I wish," the letter continued, "that you had been looking less grave when you had your portrait taken. Many a time, on the voyage out, I used to fix my eyes on your portrait, and try to imagine I was looking at it

in my own room at home, and that you were half a mile or so away from me, down at the inn in the valley. But these efforts were not successful, I must own; for there was not much of the quiet of Eglosilyan around you when the men were tramping on the deck overhead and the water hissing outside, and the engines throbbing. And when I used to take out your photograph on deck, in some quiet corner, I used to say to myself, 'Now I shall see Wenna just as she is to-day, and I shall know she has gone in to have a chat with the miller's children, or she is reading out at the edge of Black Cliff; or she is contentedly sewing in her little parlour.' Well, to tell you the truth, Wenna, I got vexed with your photograph; I never did think it was very good—now I consider it bad. Why, I think of you as I have seen you running about the cliffs with Mabyn, or romping with small children at home, and I see your face all light and laughter, and your tongue just a little too ready to say saucy things when an old fogy like myself would have liked you to take care; but here it is always the same face—sad, serious, and preoccupied. What were you thinking of when it was taken? I suppose some of your *protégés* in the village had got into mischief."

"Wenna, are you here?" said her father, opening the door of her room. "Why didn't Mabyn tell me? And a nice thing you've let us in for, by getting young Annot to start that business of going to Devonport. He's gone to Tregear now."

"I know," Wenna said, calmly.

"You know? And don't you know what an inconvenience it will be to us; for of course your mother can't look after these things, and she'll expect me to go and buy poultry and eggs for her."

"Oh no," Wenna said, "all that is arranged. I settled it both with the Annots and the Tregear folks six weeks ago. We are to have whatever we want just as hitherto, and Hannabel Annot will take the rest."

"I want you to write some letters," said Mr. Rosewarne, disappointed of his grumble.

"Very well," said Wenna; and she rose and followed her father.

They were met in the passage by Mabyn.

"Where are you going, Wenna?"

"She is going to write some letters for me," said her father, impatient of interference. "Get out of the way, Mab."

"Have you read that letter, Wenna? No, you haven't. Why, father, don't you know she's got a letter from Mr. Roscorla, and you haven't given her time to read it? She must go back instantly. Your letters can wait—or I'll write them. Come along, Wenna."

Wenna laughed, and stood uncertain. Her father frowned at first, but thought better of what he was about to say, and only remarked as he shrugged his shoulders and passed on—

"Some day or other, my young lady, I shall have to cuff your ears. Your temper is getting to be just a little too much for me; and as for the man who may marry you, God help him!"

Mabyn carried her sister back in triumph to her own room, went inside with her, locked the door, and sat down by the window.

"I shall wait until you have finished," she said; and Wenna, who was a little surprised that Mabyn should have been so anxious about the reading of a letter from Mr. Roscorla, took out the document again, and opened it, and continued her perusal.

"And now, Wenna," the letter ran, "I must finish; for there are two gentlemen coming to call on me directly. Somehow I feel as I felt on sending you the first letter I ever sent you—that I have said nothing of what I should like to say. You might think me anxious, morbid, unreasonable if I told you all the things that have occupied my mind of late with regard to you; and yet sometimes a little restlessness creeps in that I can't quite get rid of. It is through no want of trust in you, my dear Wenna—I know your sincerity and high principle too well for that. To put the matter bluntly, I know you will keep faith with me; and that when I get back to England, in good luck or in ill luck, you will be there to meet me, and ready to share in whatever fate fortune may have brought us both. But sometimes, to tell you the truth, I begin to think of your isolated position; and of the possibility of your having doubts which you can't express to anyone, and which I, being so far away from you, cannot attempt to remove. I know how the heart may be troubled in absence—mistaking its own sensations, and fancying that what is in reality a longing to see some one is the beginning of some vague dissatisfaction with the relations existing between you. Think of that, dear Wenna. If you are troubled or doubtful, put it down to the fact that I am not with you to give you courage and hope. A girl is indeed to be pitied at such a time: she hesitates to confess to herself that she has doubts; and she is ashamed to ask counsel from her relatives. Happily, however, you have multifarious duties which will in great measure keep you from brooding; and I hope you will remember your promise to give me a full, true, and particular account of all that is happening in Eglosilyan. You can't tell how interesting the merest trifles will be to me. They will help me to make pictures of you and all your surroundings; and already, at this great distance, I seem to feel the need of some such spur to the imagination. As I say, I cannot appeal to your portrait—there is no life in it; but there is life in my mental portrait of you—life and happiness, and even the sound of your laughing. Tell me all about Mabyn, who I think is rather jealous of me, of your mother and father, and Jennifer, and everybody. Have you any people staying at the inn yet; or only chance-comers. Have the Trelyons returned?—and has that wild schoolboy succeeded yet in riding his horse over a cliff?"

And so, with some few affectionate phrases, the letter ended.

"Well?" said Mabyn, coming back from the window.

"Yes, he is quite well," Wenna said, with her eyes grown distant, as though she were looking at some of the scenes he had been describing

"I did not ask if he was well," Mabyn said. "I asked y

thought of the letter. Does he say anything about the borrowing of that money?"

"No, he does not."

"Very well, then," Mabyn said, sharply. "And you blame Mr. Trelyon for not telling you. Does a gentleman tell anybody when he lends money? No; but a gentleman might have told you that he had borrowed money from a friend of yours, who lent it because of you. But there's nothing of that in the letter—of course not—only appeals to high moral principles, I suppose, and a sort of going down on his knees to you that you mayn't withdraw from a bargain he swindled you into——"

"Mabyn, I won't hear another word! This is really most insolent. You may say of me what you please; but it is most cruel—it is most unworthy of you, Mabyn—to say such things of anyone who cannot defend himself. And I won't listen to them, Mabyn—let me say that once and for all."

"Very well, Wenna," the younger sister said, with two big tears rising to her eyes, as she rose and went to the door. "You can quarrel with me if you please—but I've told you the truth—and there's those who love you too well to see you made unhappy; but I suppose I am to say nothing more——"

And she went; and Wenna sat down by the window, thinking, with a sigh, that it seemed her fate to make everybody miserable. She sat there for a long time with the letter in her hand; and sometimes she looked at it; but did not care to read it over again. The knowledge that she had it was something of a relief; she would use it as a talisman to dispel doubts and cares when these came into her mind; but she would wait until the necessity arose. She had one long and argumentative letter to which she in secret resorted whenever she wished to have the assurance that her acceptance of Mr. Roscorla had been a right thing to do; here was a letter which would exorcise all anxious surmises as to the future which might creep in upon her during the wakeful hours of the night. She would put them both carefully into her drawer, even as she put a bit of camphor there to keep away moths.

So she rose, with saddened eyes and yet with something of a lighter heart; and in passing by the side-table she stopped—perhaps by inadvertence—to look at the basket of primroses which Harry Trelyon had sent her. She seemed surprised. Apparently missing something, she looked around and on the floor, to see that it had not fallen; and then she said to herself, "I suppose Mabyn has taken it for her hair."

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